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CHRISTIAN COURIER

A Reformed Weekly

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April 25, 1997

No. 2528

North Korean famine as bad as Ethiopia's

Canadian Christians sending aid

Alan Doerksen

TORONTO, WINNIPEG — North Korea is suffering from a famine that is threatening its entire population. Marv Frey, executive director of Mennonite Central Committee Canada, calls the present famine "a crisis of similar proportions to Ethiopia." But unlike the Ethiopian famine of the mid-1980s, this one is not getting much media attention.

To help meet the need, the Canadian arms of world relief agencies — Christian Reformed World Relief Committee (CRWRC), MCC, World Vision, Presbyterian World Service and Development, the Canadian Foodgrains Bank and others — plan to send shipments of grain to North Korea in May.

Despite initial reluctance, the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA) will be matching these donations four to one, which will bring the total value of the relief effort to \$4.5 million. The famine in North

Korea is the result of floods in the last two years, which have damaged farms, dams and bridges, and destroyed millions of tons of food. North Korea's isolation and lack of allies, resulting from its communist government, have made the famine worse, as have recent droughts. According to a United Nations report, the North Korean government now allows food rations of only 100 grams of rice a day (two-thirds of a cup) for each North Korean.

Time is critical

"The critical period is between now and June," says Marv Frey of MCC. June is the time of the next harvest, and food supplies could dwindle to almost nothing before then, which could lead to mass starvation.

A group of UN researchers returned from North Korea in



North Koreans welcome shipments of rice from Canadians.

early April and reported seeing emaciated adults and malnourished children at an advanced stage of starvation. Michael Ross, a director of the

World Food Program who was part of that group, says that conditions are worse in the See CANADIAN p. 2...



Religious education in Halifax schools — hanging by a thread?



Elna Siebring teaches a Grade 3 and 4 religion class at St. Mary's Elementary School in Halifax

Valerie Walker

HALIFAX — On May 14, a service of Thanksgiving will be held in this city to celebrate the completion of the 28th year of religious education in Halifax's schools.

The practice of providing religious instruction, begun shortly after the amalgamation of the Protestant and Roman Catholic school boards in 1969, has provided area churches with a unique opportunity to reach children who do not attend church.

Elna Siebring, who co-ordinates the school religion program in South End Halifax, says that even parents who do not attend church themselves often

recognize the need for Christian education for their children. Some hope that the children will learn good values.

Shocked parent

However, Pamela Murphy-Barteaux vehemently opposed the program in St. Mary's Elementary School, where her daughter Emma attended primary class. Murphy-Barteaux

noticed that no non-Christian religions were represented and was angry at the apparent intolerance. She did not want Emma to participate.

The following September she was shocked when Emma, by then a Grade 1 student, asked to be allowed to attend religion class. "I had to swallow my own opinions," she says, "and respect

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News

Canadian government joins relief effort

... continued from page 1

north of the country where many people have been reduced to eating tree bark, which has caused intestinal bleeding.

MCC has already been helping out North Koreans significantly. Last year, MCC contributed \$870,000 worth of support to the Foodgrains Bank, which sent 4,400 metric tonnes of rice to North Korea. "We also provided \$20,000 for purchase of barley seeds for the next crop," adds Frey.

Because of North Korea's communist government, MCC and other groups have had a limited role in distributing grain once it has been sent to North Korea. There is "not the same hands-on involvement as in Ethiopia and the Sudan," explains Frey. "The actual distribution is done by the government."

To date, the Foodgrains Bank has been a key player in sending aid to North Korea. Since the famine began, it has collected \$1.8 million in donations from its member agencies, which include MCC and CRWRC.

Government slow to help

The Canadian government has been slow to respond to the



A North Korean village that was destroyed by flooding.

famine. Usually, food and cash donations to the Foodgrains Bank are matched at a ration of 4:1 by CIDA, but North Korea is not on the government's lists of eligible recipients. Because of this, the Foodgrains Bank, CRWRC and other agencies wrote to and lobbied Lloyd Axworthy, Minister of Foreign Affairs and Don Boudria, Minister for International Co-operation, asking them to make an excep-

tion to the policy because of the famine.

The lobbying worked. On April 8, Axworthy and Boudria announced that CIDA would help out the Foodgrains Bank with \$3.6 million.

"Canadians have been moved by the plight of hundreds of thousands of North Koreans who are suffering from hunger because of the famine," noted Axworthy. "We cannot be indifferent in the face of such suffering." This is the first time that CIDA has earmarked aid for North Korea.

"The Canadian government's decision to approve the use of our CIDA funding in North Korea has been received very favorably by our member agencies," says Jim Cornelius, executive director of the Foodgrains Bank. "We will now be able to put together a larger shipment that will lessen the devastating impact of the current food shortages."

Presbyterian World Service and Development has been the Foodgrains Bank's lead partner in the North Korean relief effort.

"We are doing the 'legwork,'" says Rick Fee, the agency's program director. "We have a strong desire to respond to the crisis in North Korea with compassion. North Korea and its people have been cut off from the rest of the world for a long time. We see our response as an opportunity to not only alleviate hunger, but also rebuild relationships and show solidarity with North Korea."

Fee went to North Korea last August as part of a delegation and had a chance to see the results of the famine first-hand. "What we observed was a universal shrinkage of people," he comments. "This is brought about through the communist system. Everybody's rations are decreased by the same amount."

Showing the love of Christ

The Presbyterian agency has been responding to a request by North Korean Christians for help, says Fee. "There is a Christian presence in North Korea, but it is minuscule," he explains.

Fee sees the relief effort as "a wonderful opportunity for the Christian church to show the love of Christ." But he hopes North Korea will find a good long-term solution to the famine. "Definitely, food aid cannot continue forever," he says. The North Korean government "must become more open to international relations. They lost all their friends."

The Canadian relief effort is "making a tremendous witness," says Rachel Boehm Van Harmelen, communications director for CRWRC in Canada. Last year, CRWRC participated in two shipments of grain to North Korea, contributing \$90,000 (Cdn). This year, the agency is contributing \$100,000 to the Foodgrains Bank and is supporting an experimental barley seed/fertilizer program that could provide Koreans with an extra crop before the next planting season.

No crop rotation

One problem facing North Korea is that farmers grow mostly corn and rice without much crop rotation. This has caused much of the soil to be severely depleted of nutrients, according to a report from Action by Churches Together (ACT), a worldwide network of churches that has also been doing relief work in North Korea. The Anglican Church of Canada's Primate's World Relief and Development Fund has contributed \$25,000 to ACT for North Korean assistance.

World Vision Canada (WVC) has also been helping out North Korea for the past two years, although its American sister organization has been opposing aid because of North Korea's communist government. "In Canada, we're much less politicized about aid," asserts Phil Maher, communications director for WVC. The agency has been delivering food to North Korea. "We go in there with some frequency ... working with some church groups that are there," says Maher. Getting into the country is not a problem, he notes. "You just have to make sure your papers are in order."

This month, WVC is shipping 38 tons of seed corn for planting to North Korea. In the last two years, the agency has shipped \$1 million worth of aid in the form of vegetable seeds, pasta and blankets.

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News

Parents appreciate religious education teachers

... continued from page 1
my daughter's request."

Emma is completing her second year in the Protestant religious education program, and her mother now sees it as "a very positive experience." Asked what the value of such an education is, Murphy-Barteaux says that she hopes that Emma will learn enough about a "basic, white-bread religion" to buffer her against exploitative religions and cults when she encounters them.



Elna Siebring gives extra instruction to two Grade 4 students.

Quality teaching

Many parents express their appreciation for the special relationship that their children experience with their religious education teachers. Kari Robertson, mother of three, says that she and her husband always found that their children were more excited about the religion class in school than they were about the Sunday School program that they attended each week.

The Robertsons credit their children's enthusiasm to the quality of the materials and the dedication of the instructors.

The volunteers share a strong commitment to the ministry, and whether they intend to or not, many of them find themselves volunteering year after year.

There is a constant demand for teachers. This year, 14 of a possible 35 schools offered Roman Catholic and Protestant religious education to over 1,700 students in grades 1 through 9.

While some children attend at the insistence of their parents, most teachers find the children enthusiastic.

the next morning with his Bible under his arm (the curriculum had not yet arrived).

"I figured," he says, "that I couldn't get into too much trouble talking about the Bible in a religious education class." He was right. He still teaches and insists that he has "never had a class that did not love reading the Bible aloud."

With each passing year he becomes more convicted of the need for the program.

New policy

There is always opposition to the program at some level. The

most serious challenge came in 1995 from the Parent-Teacher Association of Lemarchant-St. Thomas Elementary School. They did not want religious education accommodated during school hours, and felt that children who did not participate in the program were losing valuable teaching time while other students attended religious education class.

It was a stressful time for supporters of the program. The original (1969) policy was replaced, but more significantly, the Nova Scotia legislature amended the New Education Act

entrenching the authority of school boards to "permit persons to offer religious studies in its schools in accordance with the policies of the school board." This would prevent a challenge like the one originating at Lemarchant-St. Thomas School, and allow the school board to assess whether there was sufficient support for the religious education program in any one school.

The revised school board policy requires that 50 per cent or more of the students be willing to participate. Those concerned about lost learning time were given reassurances in the revised policy. Those who feared that non-Christian religions were being excluded were given assurances. Those who objected to a religious presence in the public school went away dissatisfied.

Cathy Todd, a principal of St. Mary's Elementary School, says that she spent a great deal of time dealing with small but vocal opposition to religious education in schools. "It was

very hard," she says. "I put a lot of effort into smoothing things over."

Budget restraints and threatened school closures have shifted the focus away from the religious study issue, and Todd hopes it stays that way. "I could not live through another upset like that one," she sighs.

"This year," she says, "has gone very smoothly." Todd reports that teachers at St. Mary's are very supportive of the program. The kids, even the ones who misbehave during religion class, seem to love the program and the volunteer instructors.

As Elna Siebring headed for the door after having taught a class, a seven-year-old student grinned and frantically waved goodbye. When a classmate asked a nearby teacher why the little girl was behaving so strangely, the teacher replied with a smile, "She's waving so hard because that's one of her favorite people in the whole world."

Calendar of Events

Please submit only brief items. Placement is subject to space availability. Lengthy, multiple-event announcements will be rejected. We reserve the right to edit the material and to charge a nominal, per issue fee per item inserted.

April 26 Annual "Festival of Praise," featuring seven southern-Ontario Christian Male choruses. Hosted by "Collegium Musicum," with piano, organ and brass ensemble. At 7:30 p.m., Word of Life Church, 310 Scott St., St. Catharines, Ont. Info.: (905) 685-9537.

to April 26 Spring concerts by the Ont. Chr. Music Assembly (Leendert Kooij, director) with Andre Knevel, organist. **Apr. 12:** 8 p.m., King St. United Church, Trenton, Ont.; **Apr. 19:** 8 p.m., Port Perry United Church, Port Perry, Ont.; **Apr. 26:** Melville United Church, Fergus, Ont. Info/tickets: (416) 636-9779.

April 26 Ligonier Ministries of Canada seminar, 8 a.m. - 3:45 p.m., Stayner Bible Conference Grounds, Stayner, Ont. Registration and Info.: 1-800-563-3529 or (519) 763-0339.

April 26 Family Outreach Ontario's conference on "Alcoholism and other Drug Addictions," 9 a.m. - 4 p.m., Ebenezer CRC, 18 Fourth Ave., Trenton, Ont. Speaker: Dr. Rich Grevenhoe, Lansing, Ill. Registration and Info.: Jane de Haan, phone (905) 679-6490 (#).

April 26 Spring meeting of Christian Rainbows Fellowship (a support group for the long-term mentally ill, their families and friends), 10 a.m.-3 p.m., Dynes Rd. Can. Ref. Church, Burlington, Ont. Speaker: Helen Kirkpatrick (Hamilton Psychiatric Hospital). \$7 pre-registration. Info.: (905) 639-1075.

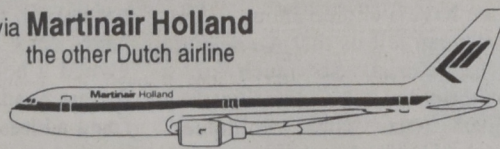
May 3 Dave Brubeck's great jazz oratorio "Light in the Wilderness" will be performed by the Niagara Symphony Chorus and soloists, 8 p.m., St. Thomas' Church, 99 Ontario St., St. Catharines, Ont. Tickets: (905) 687-4993.

May 4 Canadian Bible Society benefit concert by the St. Thomas & District Male Choir assisted by the Woodstock Male Choir "Men and Praise." At 7:30 p.m., Knox Presb. Church, St. Thomas, Ont. Also featuring organist Rick Dykstra. Freewill offering. Info.: (519) 631-9245.

May 9 Recital by Carolyn Stronks-Zeyl, A.R.C.T., M.Mus. (flute) and pianist Mark Payne, 8 p.m., Western Ontario Conservatory of Music, 645 Windemere Ave., London, Ont. For tickets call (519) 433-3147 or may be purchased at the door.

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Editorial

The most important work is done by volunteers

The Church of Jesus Christ is the only international corporation run mostly by volunteers. Some may want to dispute this claim and point to the many professionals hired by the institutional church: preachers, liturgists, evangelists, youth workers, custodians, missionaries, organists and secretaries, not to mention a host of denominational professionals.

Our response to that would be: You're talking about the agencies that erect buildings, hold worship services and spread the gospel in an organized manner. We are talking about the Body of Christ that does many things in the name of Christ without getting paid for them: working for the institutional church, the Christian schools and other Christian agencies, helping out in hospitals, providing "meals on wheels," visiting the sick, giving someone a ride, helping out a neighbor, and witnessing to others about the love of Christ.

In addition, we should realize that all church professionals are paid with money *voluntarily* given by the members of the churches. So their professionalism, in reality, rests on

volunteerism. And, to be true to the spirit of volunteerism, even those who get a wage but see their job first of all as a calling are in essence volunteers — people who willingly give up something for the sake of the Kingdom.

A motley crew of fools

If the Body of Christ in this world depended entirely on paid work, Jesus Christ Inc. would be in trouble. Its shares would take a nose-dive, and the uncertainty of a decent pay-off in the life to come would be greater than the uncertainty surrounding Bre-X. As it is, most of the work that saves and heals in the name of Christ is done by a huge work force of unpaid and sometimes unskilled laborers.

The Apostle Paul was not kidding when he observed that of these workers "not many ... were wise by human standards; not many were influential" (1 Cor. 1: 26). Of course, Paul is the best example of a volunteer, unpaid and, by his own account, unskilled ("I did not come with eloquence or superior wisdom") (1 Cor. 2:1).

But Paul did come "with a demonstration of the Spirit's power" (1 Cor. 2:4). So we can't say that God does not equip his volunteer work force. To each of us "the manifestation of the Spirit is given for the common good (1 Cor. 12:7). No one can hide behind the excuse that he or she is without any spiritual gifts.

Motivated by the Spirit

Being a volunteer worker in the Kingdom means that we often have to write our own job descriptions or we have a choice about accepting a task. Nobody can tell us that we *must* do certain things for Christ. So much of it depends on our ability to take initiatives and on our willingness (the word "volunteer" comes from the Latin word *voluntas*, which means "free will").

And you have to know where the needs are and whether or not you can meet those needs and at what cost. Jesus urged his disciples and hearers to count the cost of becoming a disciple, lest you can't finish what you started.

But the key to voluntary discipleship is the power of the Spirit. He is the one who gives the power to will and to do. And he gives the gifts to use for whatever task you volunteer and feel called to do.

Not everyone is equally free-willing

Every good community has a large group of volunteers. But within that large group there are those who work harder than others. If you want to get a clearer picture of how wide the range of volunteerism is, just look at the variety in financial contributions to a given cause. Here is an activity that is entirely

voluntary.

The basis for this activity was laid in a letter Paul wrote to the Corinthians: "On the first day of every week, each one of you should set aside a sum of money in keeping with his income, saving it up, so that when I come no collections will have to be made" (1 Cor. 16:2). Paul is not raising taxes here. He is giving guidance in the area of voluntary giving.

The formula seems very simple: set aside a sum of money in keeping with your income. But apart from the range of incomes, which partly determines the range of contributions, there is also a range of goodwill among God's people. Just what is a sum of money "in keeping with" one's income?

The same range can be observed in the area of volunteer service. If all of us gave of our time and talents "in keeping with" what the Spirit has given us, the Church of Christ would be highly successful in redeeming the world (The crop on the field is huge, but the volunteer workers are few — Matt. 9:37).

Here I am, Lord!

Earlier I said that the Apostle Paul is the best example of a volunteer. I was wrong. The best example of a volunteer is Jesus Christ. He voluntarily came to earth, which was not exactly a trip to Disneyland for him. Coming to earth was showing a willingness to lay down all the privileges he had as the Son of God and become less than most human beings of his time.

Just think of it. Jesus never held down a paying job while on earth. And although foxes have dens and birds have nests, he never owned a house or a cottage, or even a pillow for his head to rest on. Jesus was a man of no fixed address. But he spent all his working life healing and saving others. And his final assignment was to die on behalf of all those who thought that life owed them at least a decent income.

Nowhere in Scripture do we read that Jesus *had* to come to earth and *had* to suffer. What we do read is that he volunteered: "Here I am, I have come — it is written about me in the scroll. To do your will, O my God, is my desire; your law is written in my heart" (Psalm 40: 7-8).

From this we learn that at the heart of free-will work is the desire to do the will of God. Volunteerism is about letting God's *voluntas* prevail.

In the words of a song by Daniel L. Schutte, which is based on Isaiah 6:8, we may say, "Here I am, Lord. Is it I, Lord? I have heard you calling in the night. I will go, Lord, if you lead me. I will hold your people in my heart."

God loves a cheerful volunteer!

BW

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Layout: Alan Doerksen Circulation Manager and
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Letters

Creationists don't listen to creation

Gordon Legge reminds us in his news report "Creationists argue against Pope's comments" (CC, March 28) that creationists are still around and continue to organize conferences in order "to influence the broader Christian community." I, for one, certainly support their efforts to give creation its rightful place in the curriculum of all schools. However, this should not be done by denying "extra-biblical evidence."

In Legge's news story we read a number of statements usually made by creationists: the earth is very young; dinosaurs existed with humans rather than becoming extinct before humans came on the scene; and the Great Flood really happened.

In his carefully formulated book *The Biblical Flood: a case study of the Church's Response to Extra-Biblical Evidence*, Davis Young deals mainly with the biblical flood and presents us with a most interesting "history of thought in the Christian world regarding the deluge narrative in the light of extrabiblical data" (p.XII). It soon becomes clear that none of the assertions of the creationists can pass scientific examination. It seems

that creationists are so intent on defending a literal interpretation of the Scripture that they cannot or will not listen to what God reveals to us in his other book, that of general revelation in nature. Since they read the Bible in the wrong way, they also do their science in the wrong way.

I cannot do justice to Dr. Young's brilliant study. You should read it yourself, especially if you are inclined to agree with the creationists. Let me quote one of Dr. Young's concluding observations. He writes: "Commentators seeking to defend traditional ideas of the flood have been far too eager to appeal to miracles" (p.305).

Not all science is secular

Some years ago when I pointed out to a friend traces of plant or animal life of some previous geological period preserved in rock formations in the earth's crust — which indicate an "old age" for these rocks — he responded by saying: "But could God not have created these fossils in these rocks as he created them?" The obvious answer is: "Yes, of course, all things are possible. We believe

that God is omnipotent." However, would God have done such a thing just to confuse all scientists?

Young points out that many Christians like to refer to "science" as "secular science" but that this is not fair to all Christian scientists who trust their scientific findings as they study the other book of God's revelation.

The second thing I told my friend is that rocks themselves are the results of sediment, i.e., of matter deposited by water or wind (I borrowed this definition from Webster's *New World Dictionary*). This does not mean that God did not create these rocks, but certainly that he did not create them in one day. In other words, God often uses evolutionary processes in his creation. Yet it is God who oversees and directs these processes.

It is regrettable that creationists find so many admirers among honest Christian people. It seems so easy. But Young shows from history that in former days biblical scholars really tried to listen not

only to God's written Word, but also to look at God's "created order in an open, honest, and diligent way."

I remember that not very long ago a pious creationist principal brought his Christian school to the brink of destruction by insisting that all teachers had to teach that the universe was created in six twenty-four-hour days.

How easily creationists condemn without solid arguments is also clear from Legge's report. It tells us: "...many creationists see a variety of social and political ills — abortion, divorce, euthanasia, promiscuity, homosexuality, drug use, socialism, communism and anti-Christian activities — as the consequence of evolutionary philosophy run amok."

This is the language of the religious right, blazing hate and condemnation, but not an expression of responsible Christian leadership.

Rem Kooistra
Waterloo, Ont.

Make your own 'horse remedy'!

If there were a small corner available to me somewhere in CC, I would call out to all those people who have difficulty breathing because they are old and their bodies are wearing out. Make your own medicine and drink "heart wine!"

The recipe is as follows: Take a litre of wine (or some other kind of alcohol), add a bunch of parsley, 3/4 lb. of honey and two tablespoons of wine vinegar. Mix and cook for 15 minutes.

My breathing is normal again. The heart specialist told me to go ahead and use my own remedy. That was two weeks ago. Doctors don't generally like this kind of approach. When I had gallstones I also got rid of them by myself, even though it was a drastic remedy (*paardemiddel*)!

The above mentioned recipe comes from a health food store. It works.

W. Hoogendoorn
Holland Christian Homes
Brampton, Ont.

Thirsting for clarity

As the writer of an article that appeared in the Good Friday/Easter Issue of *Christian Courier* (March 28), John Valk wants to explain something about some of its content.

My article "I Thirst" originated from a Good Friday service I conducted a few years ago. That service drew from moving and meaningful material in *Reformed Worship* (Dec. 1992). That material was used in a somber yet uplifting liturgy and certain of its poignant words and phrases were incorporated (and so recognized) in sermon notes and manuscript material.

That manuscript material was recently, and hastily, submitted to *Christian Courier*, without a further thought given

to the original context. To my great horror I came to realize that that original manuscript material, now a CC article, (still) contained material from *Reformed Worship*, but material which carelessly and inadvertently went unacknowledged.

While *Reformed Worship* does not require acknowledgement for use of all its material, it is both fitting and appropriate that acknowledgement be made in this context, even at this late hour. My apologies to *Reformed Worship* and its writers, and my appreciation for a thoughtful and perceptive reader who drew our attention to the problem.

Caveat Scriptor (Let the writer be careful).

John Valk
Fredericton, N.B.

He's a member now

I appreciated Marian Van Til's insightful review of *Flourishing in the Land* and will not succumb to the temptation to review her review. I would however bring in a bit of information which she undoubtedly did not have. It concerns the church membership of one of the authors. While Marian is correct in asserting that one of the authors was not a member of the Christian Reformed Church, one of the fine byproducts of the producing of *Flourishing in the Land* is that Chris Meehan, a former Roman Catholic, has

become a member of the CRC.

Chris has had a long acquaintance with the CRC, beginning with his time as religion editor of *The Grand Rapids Press* and culminating in his co-authorship of this book. In digging into the CRC story he became convinced of the authenticity of its ministry and message. We can surely use that kind of good news in times like ours.

Tymen E. Hofman
Grand Rapids, Mich.

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Don't reform the church; re-FORMAT it!

Bert Witvoet

Isn't it time that we update the language on church and faith matters and thus bring the Kingdom of Heaven into the 21st century? Not too long ago we started hearing the language of business whenever church development and church growth was discussed. We were told that we needed flow charts and a statement of goals and objectives. These were given in cryptic bullet style presentations that gave us the feeling that we were really in control of the situation.

What if we now borrowed from the computer revolution and in particular from word processing language and seek to re-FORMAT the church. The key stroke for that, if you're using Wordperfect, is Shift F8, if you don't have Windows yet.

The building committee could be instructed to refurbish the pulpit and Lord's Supper table but to leave the baptismal FONT alone. Too many members have an emotional and covenantal attachment to the ROMAN TIMES style of the old FONT.

Preachers could be asked to

add a little BOLD to their sermons and to ITALICIZE the diaconate outreach of the church. Nor should they forget to ask sinners to adopt full JUSTIFICATION to the left and right of their faith.

Elders and deacons should really be renamed HEADERS and FOOTERS, because elders rule and deacons must be urged to do footwashing service. An added benefit will be that we can avoid the ordination of women issue because HEADERS and FOOTERS have no gender. This way we can safely avoid the HYPHENATION of "female-elders" and the word "male" in Church Order Supplement Article 3a need not be declared inoperative.

Ushers should at all times provide WIDOW/ORPHAN PROTECTION, because it looks silly to have your service begin and end with a social problem.

Isles in the church should be redesignated as MARGINS, which makes them more flexible since one can then set the distance with the stroke of a key (Shift F8, 1:line, 7:marginal).

Seeing that so many Bibles print the words of Jesus in red, we advise that the REDLINE METHOD be turned off whenever we quote the pastor in the Sunday bulletin.

Whenever the counting committee is a little disappointed about the offerings for a certain cause, they can always turn on the SEARCH AND REPLACE function (Alt F2) so that all dimes automatically become toonies.

Every sermon should end with the admonition that we strive to become more WORDPERFECT even as the church secretary is WORDPERFECT.

The result of this new language will no doubt make the church of Christ more relevant to the younger generation. They will love it when they can end the service as soon as they become bored by pressing F7. They will be asked if they want to be SAVED, but that can only improve their soul's status as their files will be recorded in the heavenly DIRECTORY on nothing less than the angelic HARD DRIVE.



Marian den Boer

The mission-trip blues

When 18-year-old Angela signed up at church to spend two weeks with a 12-member mission team assigned to build a church and a parsonage in the Dominican Republic, her father and I were thrilled. When we found out our good friend Tena had signed up as well, we felt secure. And when Ann, another friend and old-hand at mission trips, also promised to look out for Angela, we sent them off with our prayers and blessings.

We looked forward to their return and their stories.

The first full day back, Angela didn't really have any stories. She didn't say much except "I miss the group." She also didn't seem to notice that the cat and the baby had each grown about two inches. She hardly looked at them. Six-year-old Amanda (her dearest sister) put it bluntly when she called Angela a grump.

Late that afternoon, my good friend Tena phoned.

"Hello, is Angela there?" she said.

"Tena, it's great to hear your voice again. How was it?" I enquired excitedly.

"Great! Listen I'm over at Ann's. We're looking at pictures."

"How's your nose? I heard you bumped it on a scaffold."

"Oh, it's fine. Is Angela there?"

Obviously Angela wasn't the only one who didn't want to talk to me. "I'll get her," I conceded.

I called up the stairs "Angela, Tena is on the phone. She's at Ann's looking at pictures."

Angela burst out of her room "I'll take it up here," she called as she flew to the phone.

Moments later she rushed downstairs with her recently developed wad of photos, "Mom, may I have the car to go over to Ann's?"

"Sure... but may I see a few pictures first?" I begged. I hadn't realized she had them back.

"Awww, Mom."

She allowed me a peek at one group shot before she rushed out the door.

Feeling forsaken, the family started supper without Angela. Instead of a mealtime spent delighting in Angela's stories, as imagined, we moped. "She loves them more than us." Fourteen-year-old Paul concluded.

The next day Ann phoned "Is Angela there?"

I won't attempt to engage you in small talk," I grumped. "I tried that with Tena."

"And she bit off your head," finished Ann.

"Well, not quite."

"It's like mourning," Ann explained. "You feel such a loss when you come back from one of these things. It's much like going through a death or a divorce."

Later I got a call from Marty's sister, "Is Marty there?"

I shared with her how the phone was never for me anymore. "The group is in mourning" I said.

As an ex-Wycliffe missionary settled in Canada again after 10 years with her husband and four children in Papua New Guinea, she instantly identified. "So it happens after just two weeks too?"

That's when I got an inkling of her family's experience. "When you came back a year ago, it must have been quite a difficult adjustment," I said with new awareness.

"Yes! It still is," she stated.

Marian den Boer lives with husband Marty and six children in Hamilton, Ont.

FROM COAST TO COAST

ENGLISH RADIO:

BRITISH COLUMBIA

Duncan - CKAY.....	10:00	1500
Burns Lake-CFLD.....	9:15am	1400
Kitimat-CKTK.....	8:30am	1230
Osoyoos-CJOR.....	8:00am	1490
Penticton-CKOR.....	8:00am	800
Port Alberni-CJAV.....	7:00pm	1240
Prince George-CIRX.....	7:00am	94.3
Princeton-CHOR.....	8:00am	1400
Smithers-CFBV.....	9:15am	1230
Summerland-CHOR.....	8:00am	1450
Vernon-CJIB.....	9:30pm	940

QUEBEC

Montreal - CIOC.....	7:30am	600
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ALBERTA

Brooks-CIBQ.....	8:00am	1340
Edson-CJYR.....	10:00am	970
Ft. McMurray-CJOK.....	8:30am	1230
High River-CHRB.....	6:30pm	1280
St. Albert-CHMG.....	8:00am	104.9
Edmonton - CKER.....	11:00pm	101.9

SASKATCHEWAN

Estevan-CJSL.....	8:00am	1280
Weyburn-CFSL.....	8:00am	1190

MANITOBA

Altona-CFAM.....	9:30am	950
Steinbach-CHSM.....	9:30am	1250
Winnipeg-CKJS.....	9:15am	810

ONTARIO

Atikokan-CFAK.....	9:30am	1240
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Chatham-CFCO.....	6:30am	630
Fort Frances-CFOB.....	9:30am	640
Guelph - CJOY.....	8:30am	1460
Hamilton-CHAM.....	7:30am	1280
Kapuskasing-CKAP.....	9:00am	580
Kingston-WLKC.....	7:30am	100.7
Newmarket-CKDX.....	9:30am	88.5
Oshawa-CKAR.....	8:00am	1350
Owen Sound-CFOS.....	10:30am	560
Pembroke-CHVR.....	10:00am	96.7
St. Catharines-CKTB.....	7:30pm	610
Samia-CHOK.....	7:30am	1070
Stratford-CJCS.....	8:45am	1240
Windsor-CKLW.....	8:30am	580
Wingham-CKNX.....	10:30am	920
Woodstock-CKDK (fm).....	8:00am	102.3

NEW BRUNSWICK

Saint John-CHSJ.....	9:30am	700
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PRINCE EDWARD ISLAND

Charlottetown-CFCY.....	7:00am	630
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NOVA SCOTIA

Digby-CKDY.....	6:00am	1420
Kentville-CKEN.....	8:30am	1490
Middleton-CKAD.....	8:30am	1350
New Glasgow-CKEC.....	7:30am	1320
Sydney-CJCB.....	8:00am	1270
Weymouth-CKDY.....	8:30am	103.1
Windsor-CFAB.....	8:30am	1450

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Arts/Media

Film review

Sling Blade slices to the heart

Marian Van Til

Sling Blade

Rated AA. Stars Billy Bob Thornton, Lucas Black, Natalie Canerday, Dwight Yoakam. Written and directed by Billy Bob Thornton.

Billy Bob Thornton stars in, wrote and directed this low-budget but extraordinary film. He won an Academy Award for his screenplay, but his acting merited one as well. So who is this multi-talented man you never heard of before Oscar night?

Thornton, 40, came from Arkansas to Hollywood in the 1980s. He has appeared in the odd television show and in a few films, mostly as anonymous as he. He may now live in Hollywood, but *Sling Blade* illustrates that his heart and soul are still in Arkansas.

A good thing, too. Thornton is a gifted story teller, and this particular story, though fiction, grows intrinsically out of his intricate knowledge of rural Arkansas and its people.

The main character, Karl Childers, is mentally slow (the surname is, no doubt, purposeful). Karl spent most of his childhood in a dingy shed in his backyard, courtesy of his weak and bizarre father and apparently equally reprehensible mother. At age 12 Karl commits two murders (we understand his impulse) and is locked away in a state psychiatric hospital.

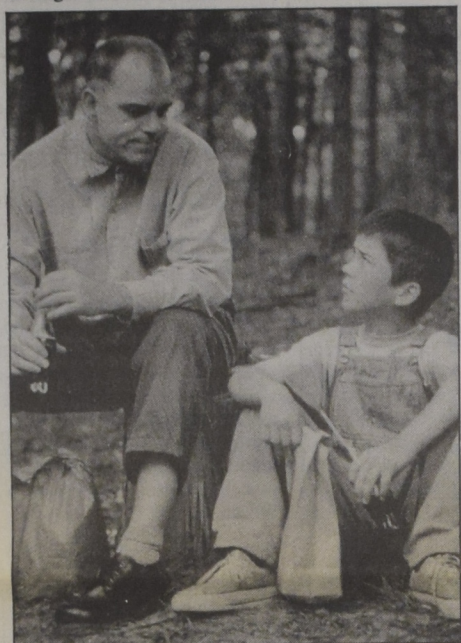
We meet him when he's presumably in his late 30s, about to be released because he's deemed to be better now.

No Scrooge here

When Karl leaves the hospital he is carrying all he owns: a stack of books which includes the Bible and Dickens' *A Christmas Carol*. After just one afternoon of freedom, Karl wanders back to the hospital wanting to "come home." The kind hospital warden is concerned and helps Karl get on his feet. The warden contacts a man he knew from church to see if the man will give Karl a job (Karl's a whiz at fixing small engines).

The film implies that both the warden and the repair shop proprietor are Christians (as are most people here, of some stripe or other). Indeed, the kindness

and even vulnerability the two men show to someone they know is a murderer, if a naive one, demonstrates that. Karl himself has read the Bible through several times, he says,



Thornton (left) and Black.

and it has helped him know wrong from right — but there are parts he doesn't understand, he admits guilelessly. He has also learned that some of what his hypocritical parents told him was in the Bible, to keep him under control, isn't there.

On his first day out, Karl meets a boy, Frank (played with a winsome naturalness by newcomer Lucas Black), who is about the same age as he was when he began his time at what he calls "the nervous hospital." Frank's father has died tragically and the boy lives with his mother, Linda (Natalie Canerday). Frank has a quiet sensitivity which his mother's abusive boyfriend, Doyle (played by country singer Dwight Yoakam), interprets as weirdness and wimpiness.

Despite Karl and Frank's chronological age difference, the man and boy react to each other instinctively as soul-mates, perhaps unconsciously sensing each other's need for a truly understanding friend.

Linda has a male friend from work, Vaughn, who is gay (played with unexpected nuance by John Ritter). Vaughn tries to look out for Linda and Frank,

fearing that Doyle will do them harm — Doyle hits Linda and has threatened to kill her if she leaves him. Doyle, of course, loathes Vaughn; and loathes Karl as well. They're both

freaks to him. Vaughn, on the other hand, assumes Karl is a kindred spirit because they are both "different."

As we get to know Karl better and observe his budding friendship with Frank, we realize that he is a man of gentleness, and, despite his mental inadequacies, of wisdom. But we also sense his gentleness must not be pushed too far.

Not 15 minutes into the film we found out that Karl used a sling blade (a scythe) to kill. But that

old-fashioned weed-whacker must have more significance; after all, its name is the title of the movie. So its subtle presence permeates the film, quietly building a kind of dread in the audience about what might happen. We're convinced Karl is no vicious monster, but will he use

that sling blade again? And if he does, we'll no doubt sympathize. What about the morality of that?

This story takes place deep in the southern American "Bible belt." In an outsider's hands, that fact could have been fodder for vicious satire or out-and-out disdain for what many would see as backwards, conservative Bible-believers.

But Thornton was spawned here and knows that many Christians live their faith; and some don't; and some mock the faith by their hypocrisy. (Some critics have read their own recoiling presumptions against the Religious Right into Christianity, by assuming that Karl's parents, for example, are characteristic of the "Christians" of the region, rather than seeing them as strange and tragic exceptions. (Incidentally, they are characters only talked about, not shown, except for a very brief cameo by Robert Duvall as Karl's father.)

One bad actor

The film's major flaw was in casting Dwight Yoakam as Doyle. We're supposed to see Doyle as a troubled man who is fighting his baser, violent and controlling impulses. But Yoakam isn't enough of an actor to effectively capture the man's Jekyll/Hyde character; so we simply see Doyle as an unredeemed and unredeemable pig whose occasional nice moments are calculated to bring him something he wants.

A great Canadian pianist

TORONTO (Canadian Scene) — Anton Kuerti is the most internationally celebrated of Canadian pianists. Recent reissues on compact disc of some of his best recordings have been welcomed by music lovers everywhere and are joined by a continuing stream of new recordings.

Kuerti was born in Vienna and in boyhood immigrated to the U.S. with his scientist parents. There he studied with Arthur Loesser, Mieczyslaw Morszowski and Rudolph Serkin. He was just 11 when he played the Grieg Concerto with Arthur Fiedler and the Boston Pops, and a few years later won the Leventritt Award. Kuerti has made his permanent home in Canada since 1965, and has travelled to 27 other countries to perform.

Many of Kuerti's recordings of the '70s are prized classics; in recent months some have been released for the first time on CD. CBC Records has issued his rendition of Beethoven's *Emperor Concerto* with Andrew Davis and the Toronto Symphony; a solo recording of Schumann's *Kreisleriana* and other pieces; and a sensitive accompaniment to mezzo-soprano Lois Marshall performing Schubert's *Winterreise* cycle. Analekta Records (Montreal) has released on 10 compact discs Kuerti's complete sonatas of Beethoven; and a new recording made with his wife, cellist Kristine Bogoyo, of works by Beethoven and Chopin.

Thornton, on the other hand, is so skilled and unmannered at portraying Karl — his stooped posture and slightly stiff walk; his gravelly voice, sentences punctuated with a kind of guttural *um-hmmm* — that we don't for a second think of him as an actor playing a part. He simply is Karl.

The other big surprise here is the humor. There's the smile-on-your-lips kind, but more laugh-out-loud stuff, adeptly woven into the warp and woof of this meandering tale, making its bitter nature much more sweet. After spending almost two and a half hours watching *Sling Blade* it's likely to roll around in your head for some hours more, provoking reflection, moral questions — and smiles.

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Church

'March to 2000' explains devotion to Mary

Marian Van Til

PRINCE ALBERT, Sask. — A recent Catholic prayer conference called "March to 2000" aimed to get Catholics to increase their prayer lives and spirituality as the new millennium approaches.

Part of the conference focussed on devotion to Mary, a topic with which Protestants take issue. Bishop Raymond Roussin insists that Protestants misunderstand Catholics' perception of Mary: Catholics have been falsely accused of idolatry, reports the Canadian Catholic News Service and *The Catholic*

Register. Because "she has transformed lives," Mary is venerated; but God is worshipped. (The Orthodox churches make the same distinction.)

To Catholics, veneration and worship are not the same. "The experience of Mary's presence is not a parallel experience to the power of God," Roussin says. "Mary is not God. But she is so much in touch with God that her presence naturally will put us in touch with the divine." Bishop Roussin encouraged his listeners to include Mary in their prayer lives "because she leads people

to Christ."

If Protestants are unaware that the Roman Catholic Church has "reformed" its view of Mary, knowledgeable Catholics aren't. Before the sweeping changes brought in by the Second Vatican Council (popularly known as Vatican II), Roussin acknowledges that Mary had been "put on a pedestal" until "she almost didn't seem to be human anymore." She was the focus of devotion "that did not always return us to Christ," the bishop admitted. Vatican II "helped us to re-situate her at the heart of the church."

Most Protestants would argue that Mary wasn't "re-situated" far enough; she is still seen, in Roussin's words, as "a mediator in their prayer life with God." But he insists that only means that "Mary becomes the medium through which we are open, not to her, but through her to Christ."

The *Register* reports that Roussin told his listeners they

could grow in faith by ridding themselves and their homes of anything offensive to Christ or to Mary, by being present for each other by being good listeners, by allowing Mary to form in them the characteristics they are struggling with (such as lack of patience), and by developing a greater "faith of the heart" by trusting God.

Marks and Spencer isn't your neighbor

LONDON, England (EP) — Is it always a sin to go shoplift? A Church of England priest is suggesting that stealing is okay, as long as the victim is a big corporation. "Jesus said, 'Love your neighbor,' He didn't say, 'Love Marks and Spencer,'" said the Rev. John Papworth, making reference to a large British retailer. Stealing from individuals and small business

owners is wrong, said Papworth, but giant retailers are a different case.

"With these institutions, all you are confronted with are these boardroom barons sitting around the boardroom plotting how to take the maximum amount of money out of people's pockets for the minimum in return," Papworth told BBC radio. The Church of

England distanced itself from Papworth's remarks, saying that the commandment "Thou shalt not steal" is an absolute one.

Youth-only churches growing

GRAND RAPIDS, Mich. (REC) — Churches designed specifically for youth are growing in Western Europe, reports *Christianity Today*. Those attracted to such churches feel alienated from established churches, according to participants at a recent conference in Oxford, England.

The participants also took note of the increasing professionalization of youth ministry. Some noted that the volunteer leaders that characterized this work in the past have been displaced. The four-day forum was sponsored by Oxford Youth Works.

Right-to-life credit


NEWARK, N.J. (EP) — A pro-life organization in New Jersey is the first in the nation to have its own credit card. The New Jersey Right to Life MasterCard, issued by the Steel Valley Bank of Ohio, will send a small contribution to the group each time a cardholder uses it. Thousands of organizations have

"affinity group" credit cards, but finding a bank to issue a card tied to the controversial abortion issue proved a challenge. William S. Leib, treasurer for the pro-life group, used his background as a bank vice-president to find an institution to issue the card.

Departing from the real truth?

NEW YORK, N.Y. (EP) — A group of Orthodox Jewish leaders is issuing a statement claiming that Reform and Conservative Jewish movements are "not Judaism." According to the *New York Times*, the Union of Orthodox Rabbis in the United States and Canada issued a statement March 31 giving what it calls "very strong, irrefutable arguments" that Reform and Conservative movements have departed from true Judaism. According to Rabbi David Hollander of Brooklyn, the statement is meant to squash efforts by the two Jewish movements to receive official recognition from Israel.

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Church

Male and female prophets, but only male teachers?

For more than 20 years the Christian Reformed Church debated whether or not female church members may hold the offices of deacon, elder and minister of the Word. Although we looked at all issues carefully, I cannot recall that anybody ever pointed out that the New Testament accepts male and female prophets but restricts women as teachers. The Reformed churches, however, accept male and female teachers but forbid female prophets.

The "prophetess" Anna stands at the beginning of the New Testament era (Luke 2:36). And she "spoke about the child" to a group of believers "who were looking for the redemption of Jerusalem" (v. 38).

At Pentecost God fulfilled his own promise: "Even on my servants, both men and women, I will pour out my Spirit... and they will prophesy" (Acts 2:18).

Philip the evangelist "had four unmarried daughters who prophesied" (Acts 21:9).

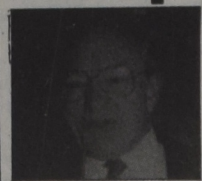
Puzzling proscriptions

For reasons that are very hard to understand in our age, Paul considered it "disgraceful" for a Christian woman to say a prayer or utter a prophecy in the congregation if her head were not covered (1 Cor. 11:5,6). (In this case, Iraq understands Paul better than Canada does). Paul considered it equally shameful for a man to have long hair (vv. 13-14).

At any rate, Paul did not use his apostolic authority to eliminate women from prophesying, but he forbade them to do so without veils over their heads. (How to reconcile this with 14:34, "Women should remain silent in the churches" is another question). Paul cannot disqualify the female prophet because God has anointed her.

However, in the Pastoral Letters Paul had reason to forbid women-as-teachers (1 Tim. 2:11-12), or restrict their teaching to female

Chapter & Verse



Wayne Brouwer
★ Andrew Kuyvenhoven
Laura Smit
Al Wolters

learners (Titus 2:4-5).

In the early church, the positions of apostles, prophets and teachers were delineated (1 Cor. 12:28). For us the difference between prophets and teachers (Acts 13:1) is impossible to define on the basis of the available sources.

The best thing we can say is that the teacher was more concerned with the body of Christian doctrine. The "sound teaching," that is, the true gospel, as well as the godly way of living, needed to be taught clearly. It had to be entrusted to reliable people "who will also be qualified to teach others" (2 Tim. 2:2).

The teachers guarded the Christian tradition. But the prophets received God's word for the moment — a word either of exhortation or prediction. The prophet spoke by the immediate urging of the Holy Spirit.

A strange turn-around

The remarkable thing in our tradition is that nobody (let's say, hardly anybody) objects to female teachers. But many oppose female prophets. The position of the prophet, if we recognize it at all, we associate with the preacher. He has been allowed to apply the abiding Word to the contemporary situation by the Spirit's prompting. That's prophecy.

In the New Testament a (veiled) female prophet was acceptable. But a female teacher hardly thinkable. Today the conservative church turns that around.

Andrew Kuyvenhoven was editor of The Banner for 10 years. He never considered "women in office" a confessional issue. He lives in active retirement in Grand Rapids, Mich.

RBC professor to teach in West Africa, Croatia

Dan F. Bloem

GRAND RAPIDS, Mich. — Dr. George Kroeze, professor of biblical studies at Reformed Bible College in Grand Rapids, Mich., recently returned from the Holy Land.

On April 25 to May 3, Kroeze will travel to Banjul, Gambia, West Africa, to teach at a retreat for 40 missionaries of the Christian Reformed World Relief Committee and Christian Reformed World Missions who are serving in Mali, Sierra Leone and Guinea. Kroeze's study and travel experience will provide the basis for his teaching. The subject will be "God's Grace in the Old Testament."

Kroeze will then travel to Osijek, Croatia, to teach a course on "A Reformed View of the Future." This will be an outline of what Jesus, Paul and

John (particularly in the Book of Revelation) teach about the Christian future. Kroeze has been invited by the Evangelical Seminary of Osijek to spend two weeks exploring our common Reformed biblical roots — and specifically its view of the future.

Among his teaching duties at Reformed Bible College, Kroeze teaches a one-semester class in the biblical book of Revelation. He explores the various ways that the book has been interpreted throughout the history of the Christian church. He was appointed to the RBC faculty in 1973 and holds a BA degree from Rutgers University (New Brunswick, N.J.), an MDiv from Western Theological Seminary (Holland, Mich.), and a PhD from Fuller Theological Seminary (Pasadena, Calif.).

Catholic bishops complain of crime and corruption in South Africa

GRAND RAPIDS, Mich. (REC) — The Roman Catholic Bishops' conference of South Africa has sent an open letter to President Mandela about the moral climate of South Africa. They say this was one of several aspects of the new South Africa that still has a pressing need for transformation. The most impor-

tant of these are crime and corruption, the bishops write.

The bishops were offered to work with government offices to fight against the culture of corruption. They see it as their duty as a church to bring the question of moral decay to the attention of the President.

Hungarian Reformed church wins court victory for schools

GRAND RAPIDS, Mich. (REC) — The Supreme Court of Hungary has recognized the claim of the Reformed Church of Hungary to some of its former Christian schools. The ruling gave the Debrecen churches the right to use 11 government buildings that were Reformed schools before 1948, when the communist government confiscated them.

According to a 1991 law, Hungary's churches have a "right of patronage." This gives them access to civic buildings

that were used for church purposes before 1948. Negotiations with the Roman Catholics moved quickly, but those with the Protestant churches have been deadlocked for three years.

Bishop Bolcskey of the Reformed Church says the local authorities agreed to return all buildings three years ago, but the central government refused. He said the Supreme Court had affirmed the local co-operation. "Debrecen was known as the 'Calvinist Rome,' and the local church and civil authorities here

always acted together," he says.

The Debrecen Reformed diocese now has 24 Reformed secondary schools, a teacher-training college, and theology faculty and two kindergartens. Lutherans and Roman Catholics also run schools, but church schools account for only three per cent of the country's total. Roman Catholics make up about two-thirds of the population, while Protestants are 22 per cent, according to the 1993 census.

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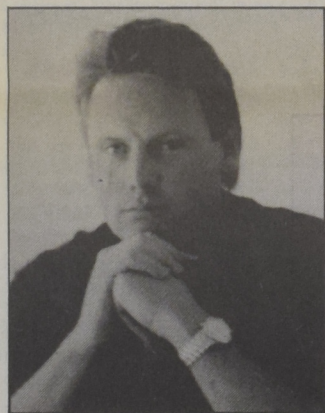
Feature

Christians should openly discuss cloning: Sigmund Brouwer

Author fictionalized today's fact of cloning

Gordon Legge

CALGARY — Red Deer author Sigmund Brouwer hit the bookstands with a thriller novel about human clones and genetic experimentation more than two years ago. In *Double Helix* (Word, \$22.99), Brouwer explores the implications of unbridled scientific experimenta-



Sigmund Brouwer.

tion in a society that longs for immortality and physical perfection.

It's a plot-driven techno-thriller, reminiscent of early Follett. With the support of key military leaders, the antagonist, Peter Van Klees, a genetics professor turned entrepreneur, carries out his most daring experiments at a top-secret institute.

Sooner than expected

In it, Brouwer, a Reformed-Christian who is the author of more than 35 fiction titles for the adult and juvenile markets, asks the question: Are we merely complex bits of protein or are we something much greater — human beings with a soul?

How did Brouwer react when he heard about the cloned sheep? "I was kind of chilled," he said last week in a telephone interview from Chicago's O'Hare Airport. He was en route from New York to Nashville, where he now lives six months of the year.

As it happens, Brouwer was putting on a young writer's workshop at a Calgary school, St. Benedict's, in mid-February when he learned about "Dolly."

When Brouwer did the research for his book, he says, the cloning of mammals such as cows and sheep was estimated to be a good 10 to 20 years off. Now it's a fact of life and the prospect of human cloning lurks just around the corner.

But while animals are amazingly complex, the cloning process is very, very simple, says Brouwer. There is all

kinds of scientific wizardry being undertaken with genetic material.

A brave new world

For instance, gene-splicing is commonplace. At the University of Basel in Switzerland, scientists inserted a specific gene for eyes into regions of fly larvae normally destined to become legs, wings, antennae and other body parts. When the fruit flies hatched, they displayed fully-formed eyes wherever the gene had been placed — up to 14 eyes per fly.

"Gene splicing is a brave new world where startling new [living] creations seem to be limited only by grant funds and a scientist's imagination, where

Dr. Frankenstein's infamous fictional efforts in comparison seem crudely and sadly unambitious," Brouwer wrote in an article for *Promise Keepers* magazine two years ago.

Researchers have also successfully transplanted human fetal organs into laboratory animals, creating "humanized" mice for experimental use. Human genes have been implanted into the permanent genetic code of pigs, cows, fish, mice and

without thought to consequence," says Brouwer. Most of what scientists undertake to do is unregulated. More often than not, regulation is relegated to an institutional ethics committee.

In his research, Brouwer discovered that at George Washington University a local review board gave permission to experiment with human embryos on the basis that they were "flawed." Two researchers separated the first two cells of a

Flushed away," says Brouwer. But even where experimentation is subject to government regulation, problems arise. Brouwer notes a news report two weeks ago indicated that one of the star researchers with the U.S. National Institutes of Health in Bethesda, Maryland, is being investigated. The researcher was doing embryo tests that contravened federal law, violating directives from Congress and the U.S. president.

No knee-jerk reactions

Brouwer thinks it's time for a wide-open debate. "We need to understand the implications of that technology and what we can and cannot do." He's not about to suggest that the scientific community operates in secret. But, as he notes, the pharmaceutical industry, for example, is a multibillion dollar business. "The stakes are so big," he says, "there sure is a lot of room for gray areas."

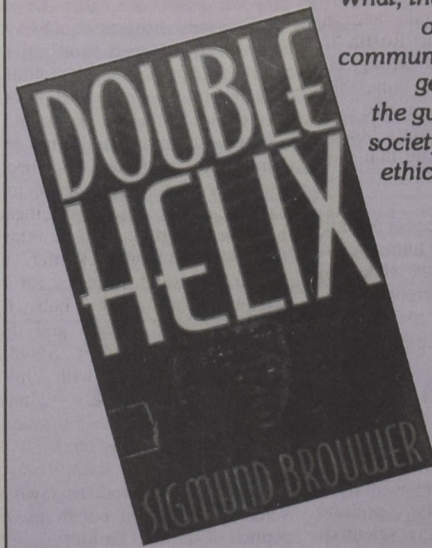
Regulation is essential. What, then, is the role of the religious community, which has generally been the guardian of the society's moral and ethical guidelines?

This is not the time for knee-jerk reactions, says Brouwer. Religious communities need to do their own research, understand the issues, take a look at what is technically possible, and engage in the debate with a calm, measured response. Brouwer thinks God designed humans with a body to support the mind; a mind to direct the body; and a soul which grows and diminishes according to the choices of the mind and body which nourish it.

"DNA, then, is the astounding tool God uses to accomplish his purpose — not a tool of convenience for our purposes."



Regulation is essential. What, then, is the role of the religious community, which has generally been the guardian of the society's moral and ethical guidelines?



sheep, says Brouwer. Hence, scientists have the power to re-engineer the human species.

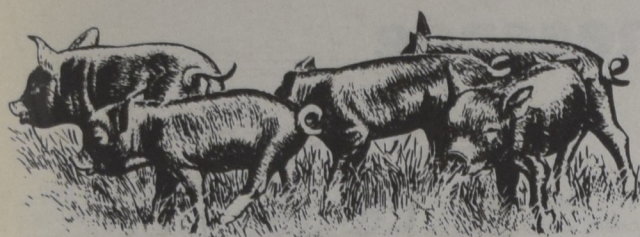
Most is unregulated

"Yet as scientists have surpassed Dr. Frankenstein in sophistication, there remains the danger of his tragic flaw — a willingness to manipulate life

human embryo. Then using a new procedure, two new embryos grew from a protective outer coating scraped off during the separation process. They developed into identical clones. With 17 microscopic embryos, the scientists produced 48 clones.

"The clones were allowed to grow up to six days, then all human embryos were destroyed.

APRIL 25, 1997



Cloning: The coming ethics war

Robert Graves

Well, it's been done. For the first time in history (many thought it would never happen), a full grown mammal, a sheep named Dolly, has been cloned. What exactly does that mean? It means that there are two sheep alive in the world today that are exactly the same in every physical attribute. Their genetic blueprints are identical, their anatomy is identical, and anything else you can imagine about them is identical. Once again science is letting its intelligence get ahead of its wisdom, forgetting the all important question "Should we?" and going with the more popular "Can we?"

Taken by itself, the sheep cloning doesn't seem that bad an idea. After all, it was done by Dr. Ian Wilmut of the Roslin Institute near Edinburgh expressly for human benefit, with the hope of producing in these sheep human proteins, specifically those with medicinal properties.

Simply put, scientists just fuse the right protein gene into the sheep embryo (rigged to produce the protein only in the milk glands, of course) and there you have it: a human-protein producing sheep. This protein, in particular, contains just the right nutrients for a premature baby that cannot yet nurse, and can be sold in a purified powdered form.

An identical flock

Where the cloning comes in useful is following the gene-planting step. A few of these protein producing (or *transgenic*, meaning it carries a foreign gene or has had an innate one removed) sheep would be created and then cloned to produce a small flock which would breed only amongst their transgenic protein-containing group, producing more of these

same sheep, resulting in an entire flock that could be farmed harmlessly for the purpose of saving a new-born's life.

There are many other "harmless" uses that are envisioned for cloning, and these should be considered as legitimate. Some say that any form of cloning is immoral and should be prevented. However, these people should be made aware that cloning in some form has been practised since the 1950s, and has proved invaluable in various schools of medical research. The new issue that has risen with Dolly is that previously it was considered impossible to clone a full grown mammal; Ian Wilmut and his colleagues from the Roslin Institute proved them wrong. Because of their work, many feel we are one step closer, one *giant* step closer, to cloning a human. It is within this issue that most of the ethical problems congregate.

Some of the uses currently being suggested for human cloning are at the least, sickening and at worst, abhorrent. Before we go any further, a few background facts are necessary.

From bizarre to sick

Human cloning is at present not possible. However, though problems currently prohibit human cloning, many scientists estimate that within a few years time we will have overcome the obstacles of cloning any person, whether from the DNA of a full grown adult or from that of an embryo (note however that many scientists assert that it will never be possible due to the complex differences between humans and sheep). We as the Body of Christ need to be very concerned about the notion of human clones. After you read some of the current proposals

for cloning, you will understand why.

Some quite sick people have already been requested strange things, such as one woman who sought to have her dead father cloned, herself carrying the embryo. True, bringing back the dead may be a seemingly harmless (albeit disturbed) notion, but this is only the tip of the iceberg.

Every one of your body's cells contains a protein called an MHC (major histocompatibility complex) protein. It's what makes you yourself. This is the welcome-mat that your white blood cells look for in every cell they meet to recognize what is foreign and what is of your body. When they encounter a cell that doesn't have your own personal MHC protein on it, they attack it. You can imagine how difficult this makes organ transplants.

Well, guess what? Your clone would have *exactly* the same MHC protein on every one of his or her cells. You can see where this is going. You could have yourself conveniently cloned for spare body parts, should anything go wrong down the road.

Dr. Patrick Dixon, geneticist and author of *The Genetic Revolution* has said that people with serious diseases could have themselves cloned for spare body parts, or dictators could have themselves cloned to cover assassinations. I've communicated with Dixon and he has assured me that he has been misquoted and was only being rhetorical in suggesting these uses. In his words, he is "...utterly opposed to human cloning."

Another suggestion is for a woman, upon having a baby, to have the child cloned and the second embryo frozen. Should anything go wrong with child #1, simply go to child #2 and take what you need (organs, blood, bone marrow, etc.). Or if child #1 dies, then simply move on to child #2, producing what some think would be an exact replica of the first child.

Not the same two people

This leads to an interesting point. It is incorrectly assumed by some that a clone will be the same person as its original. This is untrue, as any scientist will make clear. Identical twins are a living testimony to this fact, often times being quite opposite in character. Already #2 would produce an identical *looking*

child, but the child may be completely opposite in character. They are two different people.

"Kid farming" as it is being called, is the idea that certain "special" children, such as the exceptionally beautiful, smart, or gifted can be cloned and have multiple identical embryos frozen. Those folks wanting to "guarantee" having an exceptional child can simply purchase the embryo they want, based upon the information provided from the original actual child (of whom they would have an exact genetic copy). To show how ridiculous this has gotten, it has even been suggested that supermodels may be selling their cells to produce "perfect" children for seeking parents.

Some think it would be good to produce Einsteins or Mozarts by altering a clone's genetic codes to make them somehow superior in a given area. However, this is eugenics (the

tacit acceptance of cloning," (*Newsweek*, March 10, 1997, p. 60).

The important point to realize is that intrinsic to suggesting an idea such as cloning one's self for spare body parts is the notion that this clone is *not* a person in any sense of the word. Consider the logic. Obviously a clone would have to grow to adulthood before being able to give his or her organs for his or her originator's use. And obviously the clone would have to do so against his or her own will.

What this suggestion conjures up is images of clones being raised in laboratories, awaiting the day that they are physically mature enough to give up their organs. Surely science can come up with a good way to make this a "humane" thing, such as denying the babies any human, audio, or visual contact for several years thus disallowing synapses to form in their brains rendering them "senseless and emotionless" so there is no pain or sadness to be felt by them.

'Science almost always wins'

Appallingly, the very idea of cloning humans for organ usage *necessitates* a system such as the above, since only by it can the organs of a clone be brought to maturity, and only by it can their organs be taken from them. It would not be a big step for North Americans to accept such a program, considering that to a degree this sort of thing happens now in partial-birth abortions.

Again I quote *Newsweek*: "...Science, for better or for worse, almost always wins; ethical qualms may throw some roadblocks in its path, or affect how widespread a technique becomes, but rarely is moral queasiness a match for the onslaught of science. Society, then, would do well to face the fact that no known law of nature prohibits the cloning of humans. If it wants a voice in whether adults clone themselves, either to raise as children or to grow spare body parts, the time to speak up is now" (*Newsweek*, March 10, 1997, p. 59).

U.S. President Clinton has given a panel of experts in bioethics 90 days to draw up a proposal for the handling and regulation of this new breakthrough. If we as the Body of Christ don't take a stance now, then this world could be an extremely terrifying place in a few years.



process of making a race better or superior by heredity) and it is more than reminiscent of Hitler's *Übermensch*.

These very topics are those being dealt with in all major magazine articles and by all prominent geneticists, notably Dixon (see this author's and others' Internet home pages for further information). In a society where thousands upon thousands of unwanted babies are disposed of yearly, how big a step do you think it would be for that same society to consider that a clone is not really a "human" in the strictest sense of the word, much like a fetus isn't a human being? I quote *Newsweek*: "But to judge by what American society currently permits, the nation is already far along the road toward

Feature

New church brings tough message in popular format

John Van Sloten: from hard-nosed developer to warm-hearted evangelist

Bert Witvoet

CALGARY — Are you in need of Sunday breakfast? Attend New Hope, a Christian Reformed church plant in downtown Calgary. You can grab a coffee and bagel and take it into the service if you like. Jesus provides food for body and soul!

New Hope is a "seeker-sensitive" church that refuses to cater to the well-established church-goer. Everything it does is focused on helping the unchurched or non-believers step across the threshold of religiosity into the room of faith, love and healing.

"I used to be a hard-nosed S.O.B. developer. I was superficial, performance-oriented and self-serving. I had no personal relationship with the Lord ... and I was an elder."

That also means that its evangelist, John Van Sloten, does not want too many established believers to join as members. A religion reporter from the *Calgary Herald* wanted to do a story on New Hope, but Van Sloten declined, fearing that such an article might encourage disgruntled Christians from other churches to join.

Small beginnings

Van Sloten started out with six established Christian Reformed families who had a desire to reach out to the unchurched and who came to share his vision of being contemporary and authentic without having to be overtly charismatic in form.

"I experience huge freedom in a charismatic form of worship," says Van Sloten, "but it scares the willies out of new people."

Two more CRC families joined the core group, but that's it. After four months of being in operation, which was preceded by a year and three months of

preparation, the committed membership now stand at 15 families and singles, half of them of non-CRC background.

"It looks as though God really has some plans for New Hope," says Van Sloten. More than 70 people attend "small groups" during the week, which offer a variety of strengthening experiences: prayer, Bible study, fellowship and outreach. And the average attendance at services held once a Sunday is 130 people and growing.

A simple format

It is no ordinary CRC worship service that one experiences when attending New Hope. There is no vatum, no congregational prayer, no reading of the Ten Commandments, no in-house language, no benediction, no *Psalter Hymnal* and very few songs.

The structure is simple: a worship team leads the singing of praise songs shown overhead; someone offers a prayer and reads Scripture; Van Sloten brings a snappy but theologically sound message; an offering is held only for members and supporters; a few announcements are made, followed by a closing song. Then it's off to the halls for coffee and bagels.

Actually, an important element of the sermon is the showing of video excerpts that fit that week's theme. One sermon on anger showed excerpts from *Forest Gump*, in which a woman throws stones at the windows of her parents' house, parents who had abused her. "Somehow there never are enough stones" to vent one's anger, the narrator had said. This video showing fits the hi-tech atmosphere during the service that features spotlights and a sophisticated sound system.

Van Sloten has a good relationship with the staff of a nearby video store. They will ask him what his sermon is about the following Sunday and try to come up with suggestions. He also uses a source book put out by Willow Creek Church in Chicago.

This summer New Hope plans to have a series of services

centred around movies instead of sermons. People will be invited to come and watch movies. Popcorn will be provided and Van Sloten will comment on the movies, contrasting them with the gospel message. "We want to help people see the lie in the popular culture," he says.

New Hope meets in the St. John School of Fine Arts in the Kensington Street area near Memorial Drive and 10th

Christ. It certainly would not have come about had this real estate developer from Mississauga, Ont., not experienced a dramatic conversion.

Some elder!

"I used to be a hard-nosed S.O.B. developer" with a six-figure income, Van Sloten told *Christian Courier*. "I was superficial, performance-oriented and self-serving," he recalls. "I

things were not going so well. His sister-in-law was counseling his wife to leave him. He had experienced a lot of pain growing up. He had buried all that pain under a superman image. But underneath all that beat an honest and caring heart, he says.

And so over the hood of a car, John Van Sloten was moved by God to come clean. That night he met God. "It was the first time the light came on for me. Everything changed."

It took John's wife, Fran, several months to lose all her doubts about her new husband, but the reality of the change eventually convinced her. The Van Slotens sold their house and John quit his job.

Some time later their Down Syndrome child, Edward, was born. That really shattered John's self-perception. Everything he had ever prized before was image-oriented. "That birth challenged me," he now says.

A desire for ministry

From there the Van Slotens agreed that John should study for the ministry. He attended Ontario Theological Seminary in Toronto rather than Calvin Seminary in Grand Rapids, Mich., since the family did not want to lose the benefits of the health care system for Edward, who had to be hospitalized several times.

The decision meant that when John was finished, he was not eligible for ordination to the ministry in the Christian Reformed Church since Calvin Seminary did not recognize his studies at OTS. "That decision still hurts," says Van Sloten.

Instead he went the route of being sponsored by Christian Reformed Home Missions to start a church in Calgary as evangelist.

And so the "hard-nosed S.O.B. developer" from Mississauga developed a warm heart for the lost.

Direct and Reformed

Although the worship services at New Hope do not resemble the average CRC kind of service, the theology is solidly Reformed, Van Sloten believes. He credits part of that to the preaching and tutelage of his former pastor Gordon Pols.

He has strong feelings that he



John Van Sloten joined the author for coffee in the Kensington area.

Avenue N.W. The area is demographically mixed: one third lower-middle class, one third professional executives and one third artists within a large gay community. So far the church has been able to attract people from all three segments, says Van Sloten.

Aggressive developer

The story of New Hope is in a sense also largely the story of John Van Sloten's new life in

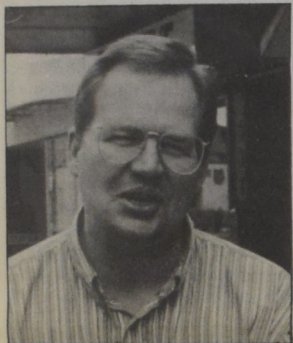
worked long hours, was verbally abusive to my wife, I had no personal relationship with the Lord ... and I was an elder [in the Clarkson Christian Reformed Church]."

But one evening after church, youth pastor Rick Nanninga asked him how he was doing. Before Van Sloten knew what was happening, he started to confess that his life was falling apart.

Behind the mask of success,

is doing exactly what God wants him to do, but he would never say, "God told me to say this." Calgary is a fundamentalist, charismatic kind of city as far as churches are concerned, he says, and that kind of talk might go over well, "but it scares the daylight out of me."

"I'm very direct," he adds. "God has given me the ability to say things in a straightforward way without making people feel judged."



He likes being used as a mouthpiece of God.

One thing is certain, he talks fast and he uses colloquial language in his sermons, with a fair bit of humor and irony sprinkled in. It's as if you are hearing a developer present the values of God's real estate empire.

"We're not soft in terms of what we say," says Van Sloten. "We don't preach light gospel, feel-good messages." His first series of sermons was on the attributes of God. The second series was on total depravity. He feels he is becoming more Reformed by the day.

The importance of prayer

But Van Sloten would like to see more emphasis on the gifts of the Spirit in Reformed churches. Prayer is very important in small groups and in personal life, he says.

It is all the more important because he often experiences much opposition on a spiritual level. He mentions one encounter with the wife of an atheist who at first seemed to accept the message of the gospel and then began to accuse Van Sloten of having developed a cult-like, Nazi-style kind of renewal.

He took that accusation too

seriously at first, questioning his whole approach. "Finally I realized that what she said was wrong," he says. A few weeks later she apologized for everything.

Van Sloten often feels inadequate. For the last three or four months he has not felt that he has what it takes. "But that's a good place to be," he adds. "It makes me depend totally on God."

Van Sloten's greatest sense of well-being comes from preaching the gospel. Preaching is a brand-new experience for him — he has delivered only 18 sermons so far — but he loves the task. He likes it that he is being used "as a mouthpiece of God."

Authentic preaching

Van Sloten's enthusiasm is shared by other members of the little congregation. Small groups co-ordinator Dale Melenberg says that being part of New Hope has been "a tremendous experience for all of us. I can't tell you how much we have grown, emotionally and spiritually."

He characterizes Van Sloten's preaching style as "passionate, thorough, personal and authentic." He thinks of him as a visionary — "one who clearly sees the end result."

Being a visionary inspires others. It builds confidence and hope in New Hope members, and it makes John's sermons sparkle. That was recognized at Ontario Theological Seminary, apparently, because at its 1996 graduation ceremonies, John Van Sloten was the sole recipient of the Award for Excellence in Preaching.

The harvest is great, laborers few

Dear P & M:

Many times appeals are made for support of persons working for Youth With A Mission (YWAM), Youth For Christ, Campus Crusade and Inter-Varsity. I realize that they are all working for good causes, but I wonder what makes them different from one another in their goals, methods, etc. Couldn't they work together or amalgamate somehow in order to save money in administration? It seems to me that many of these projects are overlapping.

While I mentioned only four, there are probably many more organizations with the same goals. At our yearly Mission Fest in Vancouver there are over 200 missionary organizations doing their own things. It makes me wonder how much duplication there is.

Dear Missionary Organizations:

Yours is a highly theoretical question. Each of these organizations has its own history, staff, publications, target areas and mandates. Trying to amalgamate all of that is about as realistic as dreaming of uniting all the churches into one mega-denomination. Think of the massive administration. Consider the lost energy.

Looking at this more positively, let's consider this in light of Jesus' words about the ripe harvest and the few laborers. All of these organizations are involved with harvesting activities. During the harvest, you can't get enough combines to do the work, never mind the personnel. So we're thankful for everybody who is moved by the Spirit to spread the gospel. We might even wish that there were 400 missionary organizations at your Missions Fest, instead of 200!

All this choice puts the onus on us. It is our responsibility to do some homework on each one and to support the one with which we're most in tune in terms of our theology and personality. Once you do some checking you discover that there are some key differences in approach and targeted area.

The four you mention, for example, may overlap somewhat, but they do have distinct mandates. Youth For Christ works with com-

Peter and Marja

are
IN



munity youth. Youth With A Mission trains youth to evangelize to unchurched people of all ages in cities throughout North America and the world. Inter-Varsity tends to target high schools and community colleges. Campus Crusade is found on university campuses.

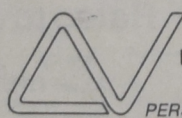
The closest university to us here in St. Catharines is Brock. There you will find Christian groups representing three of the four organizations you listed, as well as the Navigators, Campus Ministry (including the Christian Reformed Church's university chaplain, Peter Schuurman), the Chinese Christian Fellowship and a local charismatic megachurch called Word of Life.

To tell you the truth, when one of our young people approaches the two of us to support them as missionary volunteers for a well-respected and established Christian agency, we give them our blessing and some financial support. It takes a lot of commitment and desire to reach out to the lost and we don't want to quench the Spirit in any way.

As we said earlier, there's a huge harvest field waiting. If or when some overlap becomes apparent, we hope the field workers will be wise enough to move on to where they are needed more. Even if few souls are won, we find that the volunteers come back with a greater passion for the lost. That alone makes support of these types of organizations worthwhile.

Write to: P & M, 16 Kimbermount Drive, St. Catharines, ON L2N 5V6.

Peter and Marja Slofstra are a pastor and wife team living in St. Catharines, Ont. They are assisted by an advisory panel consisting of Herman de Jong, Bill Lidkea, Alan Vandermaas, Marian Van Til and Bert Witvoet.



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Environment

Yukon wolves walk a fine line

Marian Van Til

WHITEHORSE, Yukon — During the provincial election campaign last fall in the Yukon, the existing Aishihik/Kluane "wolf control" program became a political issue. When a new NDP government was elected, its Minister of Renewable Resources, Eric Fairclough, declared a temporary moratorium on this year's wolf kill "until a panel of concerned Yukoners

wildlife programs; implementation of "respectful regulations" on the hunting of wolves.

Mixed messages?

In December 1996, however, the Yukon government announced that the '96-97 winter wolf kill, as well as a sterilization program, would go on as planned, says "Take Action," and will not be re-evaluated until sometime later this spring



WARREN GUEST, VAN CLEVE PHOTOGRAPHY

Young wolves learn some hunting skills by scuffling with each other.

could be convened and allowed to review the program," reports the spring issue of "Take Action," a newsletter produced by the Animal Alliance of Canada.

The Yukon Fish and Wildlife Management Board and the Alsek Renewable Resources Council have asked Fairclough's ministry to fully implement the original Wolf Conservation and Management Plan adopted in 1992. These two groups identified three priorities: government legislation to protect wildlife habitat; greater emphasis on non-consumptive

(the end of the fifth year of the 1992 program).

The government has said it will work with First Nations and other interested parties to hire an independent scientific expert to conduct an impartial review of the program. It is commonly acknowledged that the choice of expert will be critical.

Minister Fairclough says he will move to implement "forgotten aspects" of the 1992 wolf plan, particularly a recommendation (7.1) which says: "Future management of caribou, moose and sheep and their habitat in the Yukon must have the objective that populations are not allowed to reach levels where wolf reduction might be considered necessary."

The re-evaluation of the 1992 plan will not be complete until the fall of 1998.

Beach bombs and mountain madness: a rite of spring

The rite of spring is about to commence. Boys, girls, birds, bees — no one can seem to get enough of it. The outdoors, I mean — the sun, and fresh air, the lakeshore or the mountain trail (what did you think I meant?).

We are heading outdoors, to national, provincial and local parks in greater numbers every year. In the more popular places, like Banff National Park, the unheard of has occurred. Quotas have been suggested or implemented. There is no free access to the wilderness. You pay at the entrance and take a number, waiting your turn to visit the most attractive campsites.

How have we come to this place where we seem poised to overwhelm the very beauty we come to enjoy? And how is it that while we are irresistibly drawn to the natural world, we seem doomed to destroy it, even in the process of recreation? I began wondering about these questions while talking to a ranger at a Washington state park a while ago.

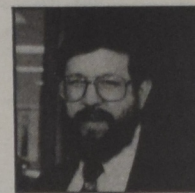
Loving nature to death

Each year the boards descend on the tide-pools at Deception Pass State Park north of Seattle. These hard rock pools are one of the few such beaches still available to the public by car along this stretch of Puget Sound.

Two years ago a minus tide in May brought out 1,200 students and teachers in 28 school buses and numerous vans — all converging on a three-acre stretch of beach for a "field trip." It quickly turned into a death walk for beach creatures. State Park Ranger Rick Blank said that "the beach looked like a moonscape. The gravel areas were all covered with pits from the foot prints." On the hard surfaces the creatures hiding under the sea lettuce fared no better. What escaped being crushed out-right often ended up in a bucket. After an hour of probing, prodding and warming up, few animals survived the return trip to the ocean.

Most of the damage was inadvertent. People want to spread out and see new things. In the discovery process the damage occurs. The sheer number of people wading into the water overwhelms the system. Actions that individually are not hurtful add up to major

Creation waits...



John Wood

losses of species diversity in the local system.

Children learn about the world around them by manipulating it. They pick it up, feel the texture, pull it, heft it, test the limits. But in this crowded situation chaos quickly reigned. "The mossy chitons," Rick said, "often became 'beach bombs' as over exuberant youngsters hurled them off the rocks toward the water and almost certain death."

Not enough money

Clearly the situation was out of hand and something needed to change. But numerous requests to state and private funding sources were turned down. So there will be no upgrades in staff, or live-tanks for safe demonstrations, nor cement walkways to protect the delicate beach creatures. There isn't enough money to go around to all the needs.

Volunteers have stepped in with a partial solution for this beach. They are typical of groups all over North America that have become local stewards of the landscape in their area. The Beach Watchers, a non-profit group, have produced a beach etiquette guide for visitors, and the park has requested teachers to make reservations before they come to the park.

But the need is still too large. So each spring, Rick Blank schedules his vacation days by the tide tables, so that he can volunteer his time on the beach working with the crush of visitors. It isn't a perfect solution, but a stop-gap until the public interest is sufficient to generate adequate public policy to meet the need.

Home grown stewardship

What can you do? Find a volunteer group that cares for the creation and join them. Inform yourself of the needs of your favorite natural area. Make the rite of this spring count by caring for creation in your own special place.

John R. Wood teaches environmental science at The King's University College, Edmonton.

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Please write: CSS, 455 Spadina Ave., #210, Toronto, ON M5S 2G8 or telephone: (416) 598-2181

Rates to June 30, 1997

RRSP	Regular Fund
Appr. 4.3%	3.75%

Your funds will be invested in Christian Reformed Church and Christian school building projects in Canada.



Call: (416) 461-1207 evenings or write:
Christian Reformed Extension Fund
45 Harriet St., Toronto, ON M4L 2G1

APRIL 25, 1997

Comment

Two under 35

Dear Peter:

I sometimes wonder if people our age spend too much time worrying about the future. I worry about keeping my job; trying to make plans for my future when I don't know how much longer I'll be able to afford the cost of living in Toronto.

A few years ago it was fretting about school: what to study, how to make my schooling count most effectively towards finding a satisfying career — do I go back for more school once I'm finished with one degree? And then my favorite: the advertising blitzes in February about RSPs and all this talk about there being no Canada Pension Plan when you and I reach retirement age.

Nothing unusual for people our age, methinks. But I wonder if we spend enough time thinking about how we got here. Our past. Where did we come from?

I don't think a lot about my grandparents as individual people: I had the chance to know only one of them, and she's been gone for more than 10 years already. But I do think a lot about the legacy my grandparents left me. I don't know if they thought about the influence they would have on my life.

I suppose they might have. Because all four of my grandparents were willing to take a boat trip across an ocean, I am a Canadian. I consider that quite a gift. I don't imagine that adjusting to life in this vast country was an easy transition for them to make.

I particularly think of what my father's parents went through: arriving in a new, rich, country with so much promise, only to experience years of drought in the Saskatchewan Dust Bowl of the 1930s. Most of the Dutch immigrants in their community went back to the Netherlands. But my grandparents stuck it out, though they eventually had to start over again in Alberta. I will always be grateful for their courage and faith.

I also received my ethnic heritage from my grandparents. That, of course, you might say was inevitable. But it's something I sometimes consider a mixed blessing.

As I was growing up, I shunned the "Dutch" in my hyphenated Canadian identity. Though my parents seemed more Canadian than a lot of my friends, if one makes such judgments based on what's on the dinner table and the language spoken around that table, we still seemed so segregated from the rest of what I thought of as Canadian society. We went to a church with all those Dutch people who all looked more or less alike. My brothers and sisters and I all went to a school filled with blond kids with Dutch names.

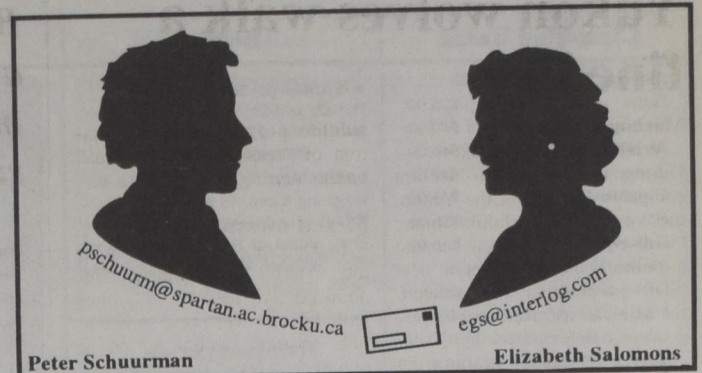
If we were going to remain so Dutch, why, I sometimes wondered, didn't my grandparents just stay in Holland? But then I moved to Toronto and I discovered something. Here is a city filled with people who speak the language of the country of their birth.

The Edmonton I grew up in had pockets of newly arrived immigrant communities, but the majority of its population was descended from turn-of-the-century Eastern European immigrants who blend in visually and have spoken English for years. Toronto, in sharp contrast, is filled with people of all colors, who dress in all sorts of ways, and who speak all sorts of languages. And then I realized my Dutchness was just as much a part of my Canadian identity as my passport is.

I knew I had come to terms with that identity when I brought my plate of "bitterballen" to a party hosted by some Italian-Canadian friends. They gobbled them up and were pretty impressed with my culinary talents, while I relished their cannelloni and tiramisu. And I realized, with a bit of a shock, I was quite proud of my Dutch heritage and able to share something of that heritage with my Italian-Canadian friends.

I still cringe when people refer to the Dutch Reformed Church, though. And I often feel claustrophobic within what I call the "Dutch ghetto." But there is something comforting in being able to move across the country and find someone who's related to your uncle, or to sit down in any Christian Reformed Church and be offered a peppermint by your neighbor.

*Tot ziens,
Elizabeth*

*Dear Elizabeth:*

I like how you framed your letter in the context of our "future anxiety." To see God's faithfulness in the past gives us confidence for the future. My colleague the Catholic chaplain said that our generation can identify with our grandparents' generation much more than the generation in-between because we share similar hardships. Our search for opportunity in the West and Far East is comparable to their immigration dreams. We have much in common.

I am grateful that I was able to get to know and love my grandparents as I grew up. It is a privilege to know their courage, and to know their mistakes, too.

My grandparents had little education. They worked hard to make a future for their descendants when they landed in Ontario. When I think of the depth and strength of their commitment to Reformed institutions, I am awestruck. We don't have that kind of commitment to the community (to repeat what I hear some older folks say).

How have we changed over the generations? I was at a retreat a few weeks ago at which Craig Van Gelder, who teaches at Calvin Seminary, gave a lecture on the history of the Christian Reformed Church. He identified three generations in Canada, and he labelled them as follows: the "immigrant survivors" who started in this country with very little, as the "indentured servants" of settled Canadians.

Their children he labelled the "system builders," who labored to build the CRC "infra-structure" in Canada, all the while trying to shed some of their Dutchness and assimilate with broader culture. But real assimilation has occurred with us, the next generation, the "cultural engagers."

We have no memory of the homeland; instead, we share childhood memories with other Canadian children — like *Sesame Street* and Paul Henderson's famous goal. We are still part of the Dutch CRC community, but we are also more deeply embedded in broader Canadian culture.

I, too, wrestle with this Dutch CRC inheritance. It's like a permanent piece of clothing I wear everywhere I go. Sometimes I squirm within its confines, other times I brag about its special features, and other times I just appreciate how comfortable I am within it.

Finding the "Dutch ghetto" too confining at times, I have taken flight to some interdenominational (and multi-ethnic) groups, as well as some groups centred on sports, academics or other common interests. By participating in these groups, I come to see more clearly what we are all about, and can better appreciate our strengths and weaknesses, as well as theirs.

One strength I have come to appreciate is our focus on the pervasive lordship of Christ — our Christian worldview. I work with many different "flavors" of Christians at Brock, and it's sad to see how many of them separate their faith and daily life into separate compartments. This makes me feel that we as Reformed Christians have something very valuable to contribute to the broader Christian family.

But this strength is also a weakness. As a "thinking" people, we fail to develop our "feeling" side; sometimes I wish we could be more expressive without being so self-conscious about it. Raucous laughter and loud wailing don't come easily in Dutch circles.

At Brock, I am surrounded by Mennonites and Lutherans, who are mostly German. Ethnicity, like gender, is something you can deny but never escape, and each ethnic uniform — Dutch, Italian, Japanese, whatever — comes with its own baggage. You can constantly fight it, or you can love it, grow with it, and shape it as best you can. I think I'll choose the latter.

*Daag,
Peter*

P.S.: It's been four months and four "letters" now. I'm really getting curious as to who you are. I hope we can meet soon and get to know each other face to face. This e-mail exchange, while obviously an interesting activity, lacks real life and personality. For example, do people ever call you Liz? We need to be introduced.

P.P.S. from Elizabeth: How's this for a little bit of personality: nobody calls me "Liz" and gets away with it.

Classifieds

Classified Rates	Births	Anniversaries	Anniversaries	Anniversaries
(Revised February 1, 1995) Births \$25.00 Marriages & Engagements \$40.00 Anniversaries \$45.00 2-column anniversaries . . \$90.00 Obituaries \$45.00 Notes of thanks \$35.00 Birthdays \$40.00 All other one-column classified advertisements: \$15.00 per column inch. NOTE: Minimum fee is \$15.00. Letter under file number \$35.00 extra. Photos: \$25.00 additional charge. Note: All rates shown above are GST inclusive ATTENTION! a) <i>Christian Courier</i> reserves the right to print classifieds using our usual format. b) A sheet with information about an obituary sent by funeral homes is not acceptable since it leads to errors and confusion. c) Photographs sent by fax are not acceptable. If you wish a photo included, send us the original. d) <i>Christian Courier</i> will not be responsible for any errors due to handwritten or phoned-in advertisements. e) The rate shown above for classifieds covers any length up to five column inches. <i>Christian Courier</i> reserves the right to charge for additional column inches at the rate of \$15.00 per column inch (GST incl.). NEWLYWEDS & NEW PARENTS We offer a one-year subscription for only \$25.00 (GST incl.) to the couples whose wedding is announced in the <i>Christian Courier</i> and to the parents of the child whose birth announcement appears in our paper. To facilitate matters, we encourage those who request the wedding or birth announcement to enclose \$25.00 and the couple's correct address. Christian Courier 4-261 Martindale Rd. St. Catharines, ON L2W 1A1 Phone: (905) 682-8311 Fax: (905) 682-8313	WIERMA (BUMA): Ronald and Sonia thank God for the safe arrival of their first child NICHOLAS AARON born on April 10, 1997, at 9:48 a.m., weighing 8 lbs., 15 oz. Proud grandparents are Durk and Thea Buma of Hamilton, Ont., and Elco and Ann Wiersma of Dundas, Ont.		Loppersum Whitby 1947 May 7 1997 "Trust in the Lord with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding; in all your ways acknowledge him, and he will make your paths straight" (Prov. 3:5-6). With thanksgiving to the Lord, we hope to celebrate the 50th wedding anniversary of our parents and grandparents DERK and RIE NANNINGA (nee WEESSIES) We are thankful to our parents for modelling their wedding text faithfully to us. May God continue to use you to be a blessing to all. We love you Mom and Dad, Opa and Oma. Gerda & Dave Repol — Whitby, Ont. Sandy, Trees, Andrew John & Karen Nanninga — Unionville, Ont. Nathaniel, Natalie Rick & Elizabeth Nanninga — Orillia, Ont. Jennifer, Lisa, Michael, Sarah You are invited to an open house to be held on Saturday, May 10, 1997, the Lord willing, from 2-5 p.m., at the Hebron Chr. Ref. Church, 407 Crawford St., Whitby, Ont. Best wishes only. Address: 148 Melissa Cres., Whitby, ON L1N 7T8	
	Anniversaries  1957 May 18 1997 "In all thy ways acknowledge him, and he shall direct thy paths" (Prov. 3:6). With thankfulness to the Lord, we wish to announce the 40th wedding anniversary of our parents and grandparents CORNELIS and GEERTRUIDA DE JONG (nee BROUWER) We pray that the Lord will continue to bless you both in the time to come. With much love from your children and grandchildren, Wendy & Henry de Jong Michael, Jovita, Laura Yolanda & Doug Williamson Andrew, Joelle, Kyle Betty & Arie Vellekoop Jonathan, Steven Judith & Peter Vellenga Johanna, Steffen, Jaclyn, Joy Jacqueline De Jong An open house will be held on Saturday, May 10, 1997, D.V., from 2-4 p.m., at the Free Reformed Church in Vineland, Ont. Your presence is our present. Home address: 6th Ave. Louth, R.R. 1, Jordan, ON L0R 1S0	Anniversaries 1957 April 26 1997 We are happy to announce the 40th wedding anniversary of our parents AUKE and BETTY HUIZINGA (nee FABER) We thank the Lord that they have shared 40 wonderful years together. May he continue to bless their union and keep them in his care. Congratulations and love from your children, grandchildren and great-grandchild. Ruth Huizinga — St. Albert, Alta. Darryl & Tisha (Korinna) Anne Huizinga — Rexdale, Ont. Evelyn Huizinga & Francis Methuen — St. Albert, Alta. Sean, Connor Marlene & Patrick Caicco — Downsview, Ont. Michael, Nicole Home address: 32 Royce Ave., Brampton, ON L6Y 1J5	Anniversaries Ferwerd, Fr. Newmarket, Ont. 1937 May 5 1997 We rejoice and give thanks to the Lord for his faithfulness shown to our parents, grandparents, great-grandparents, as they celebrate their 60th wedding anniversary. GEORGE and JEAN MOZES (nee DROST) We pray the Lord will bless and guide you in the years to come. "Give thanks in all circumstances for this is God's will for you in Christ Jesus" (1 Thess. 5:18). Marguerite & Henry Boonstra — Prince George, B.C. Marie & Ken Miedema — Newmarket, Ont. Garry & Edna Mozes — Beeton, Ont. Ann & Eric Bowdery — Tottenham, Ont. Jim & Kay Mozes — Newmarket, Ont. 12 grandchildren and 19 great-grandchildren. Home address: 307 Denne Ave., Newmarket, ON L3Y 4M5 Phone: (905) 895-5844.	Anniversaries Sloodorp Guelph the Neth. Ont. May 17 With praise and thankfulness to God, we are happy to announce the 55th wedding anniversary of our parents PETER and ALICE MATTER (nee DEBOER) Children: Faye & Mike Tjoelker — Guelph, Ont. Richard & Jennifer Matter — Woodstock, Ont. Rose & Andrew Vanderlaan — Ferguson, Ont. Luke & Hennie Matter — Burlington, Ont. Bert & Teeny Matter — Guelph, Ont. 21 grandchildren and 2 great-grandchildren. Home address: 256 Water St., Guelph, ON N1G 1B7
	Thank You The Wielemaker family likes to thank the Christian community for the widespread interest, the many cards, and the fervent prayers offered on their behalf during the nine weeks of Tony's illness, after he suffered an accident in the Dominican Republic. Even though Tony did not recover here on earth, the family experienced much strength and support which can only be accredited to our Heavenly Father. Thank you, one and all! Hilda Wielemaker, Trenton, Ont.	Vacations GOING TO HOLLAND FOR VACATION? Why not rent a VACATION APARTMENT and visit family and sight-see at your leisure. CENTRALLY LOCATED near APELDOORN. Year-round accommodations. FOR BROCHURE OR MORE INFORMATION CALL Harold or Nellie at (905) 985-7891 or fax us at (905) 985-3007 e-mail: harnel@idirect.com	Personal Retired widower, independent, Protestant, good health, early 70s, likes to develop a friendship with Chr. lady, approx. same age with a sincere hope of a lasting permanent relationship in the future. Location southwestern Ontario. Please send letters to File #2663, c/o Christian Courier, 4-261 Martindale Rd., St. Catharines, ON L2W 1A1	For Rent A large, comfortable, four-bedroom home in Ancaster. Excellent location. Flexible lease arrangement. \$1,200 per month, including utilities. For more information, please call (905) 648-2139, ext. 260 or 290. For rent: Three bedroom cottage in scenic Holton, the Neth. Contact: A Borger at (905) 623-6049 For rent: One bedroom apartment. Private. No pets. Country living. Jordan/Vineland area. Phone (905) 562-7464
Birthdays VAN ROOYEN: Thankful to God we are glad to announce the 90th birthday of our father DIRK VAN ROOYEN on May 6, 1997. Thank you Dad, for your self-sacrificial love, care, example and leading us, your children, in the fear of the Lord. We, your children, grandchildren, great-grandchildren and great-great-grandchildren, wish you a happy and God honoring birthday. Dad resides at 40 Elm Street, South Chatham Village, Chatham, Ont. Open house will be on Saturday, May 10, from 2-4 p.m. Best wishes only.	Personal ONE TO ANOTHER Christian companion magazine. Hundreds of readers Canada-wide. Single issue \$5. Write to: #12 923 2nd Ave. S. Lethbridge, AB T1J 0C7			

Classifieds

Teachers	Job Opportunities/ Events	Teachers
<p>MAPLE RIDGE, B.C.: Haney-Pitt Meadows Chr. School is an inter-denominational school located 45 km east of Vancouver. Currently we offer Christian education in Grades K-8 with plans to add High School in the coming years. We will have intermediate and middle school openings in the Fall. Candidates with strengths in computer and science will have preference. Send a resume and covering letter to:</p> <p>Mr. Rod Berg, Principal Haney-Pitt Meadows Chr. School 12140-203 St. Maple Ridge, BC V2X 4V5</p>	<p align="center">Laurentian Hills Christian School Kitchener, Ont.</p> <p>LHCS was established in 1967 and by the Lord's grace has grown to the current 170 students and 8 staff members. Due to the need to expand the number of classrooms and teachers, Laurentian Hills Christian School requests applications for the following teaching positions for the 1997-1998 school year.</p> <p>A full-time upper elementary school teacher is required with particular interests and strengths in teaching French and Physical Education. This position may include some rotary assignments in the upper grades.</p> <p>There is also a possible opening for a part-time (approx. 50%) teacher at the middle grade level.</p> <p>Please direct all inquiries and resumes identifying specific strengths and interests to:</p> <p align="center">Luke Janssen, Principal c/o Laurentian Hills Christian School 11 Laurentian Drive, Kitchener, ON N2E 1C1 Phone: (519) 576-6700</p>	<p align="center">CENTENNIAL CHRISTIAN SCHOOL TERRACE, B.C.</p> <p align="center">TEACHING POSITIONS OPEN</p> <p>Centennial Chr. School invites applications from committed, Christian educators to fill definite openings for the 97/98 school year in the following areas:</p> <p align="center">Intermediate — Grade 5 High School — Social Studies Art — Grades 4-10 French — Grades 7-10</p> <p>These positions also involve teaching duties in other areas. Additional openings for classroom teachers are anticipated at primary and intermediate levels.</p> <p>Centennial Chr. School presently offers Christian education to approximately 250 students in Kindergarten - Grade 10. The addition of grades 11 and 12 is being planned. Please contact:</p> <p align="center">Centennial Christian School Frank Voogd, Principal 3608 Sparks Street, Terrace, BC V8G 2V6 Phone (250) 635-6173; Fax (250) 635-9385</p>
<p>STRATFORD, Ont.: Stratford & District Christian School invites teaching applications for a DEFINITE opening in Grade 1 & 2. Strengths in music, computers and French would be an asset. If you would like to be part of a dynamic Christian staff and community, please send your resume by May 7, 1997, to:</p> <p>Mr. Edward J. Petrusma, Principal Stratford & District Chr. School 130 Huron Rd., R.R.#1 Sebringville, ON N0K 1X0 Phone: (519) 393-5675 Fax: (519) 393-6306</p>	<p>Maple is a medium-sized Design/Build Contractor with offices in Ontario, Alberta and B.C., with projects in building and water/wastewater treatment. We have immediate openings for:</p> <p align="center">A PROJECT MANAGER</p> <p>with a P.Eng. or CET designation and relevant experience in ICI construction of design/build, lump sum, and construction management projects,</p> <p align="center">AN ESTIMATOR</p> <p>capable of preparing detailed estimates for design/build building projects, working closely with designers and involved in presentations.</p> <p align="center">A JUNIOR CO-ORDINATOR</p> <p>assisting project managers and estimators in the procurement and expediting of construction projects.</p> <p align="center">Send resume in confidence to: Maple Engineering & Construction Canada Ltd. 201 County Court Boulevard, Suite 600 Brampton, ON L6V 4L2; Fax: (905) 457-2498</p>	<p align="center">Job Opportunities</p>
<p>SMITHERS, B.C.: Bulkley Valley Christian School, Smithers B.C. (K-12, 370 students on 2 campuses) has a definite opening for September 1997 for a high school science teacher (preferably chemistry), with computer ability. Please address inquiries/resumes to the principal:</p> <p>Mr. Evert Vroon, B.V.Christian School, Secondary Campus, P.O. Box 3635, Smithers, BC V0J 2N0. Tel.: (250) 847-4238; Fax (250) 847-3564.</p>	<p align="center">Reformed Engaged Encounter</p> <p align="center"><i>A wedding is a day... A marriage is a lifetime!</i></p> <p>An opportunity for couples contemplating engagement or Christian marriage to look openly and honestly at their commitment to one another.</p> <p align="center">Date: May 16-18, 1997 Location: Pearce Williams Conference Grounds, Iona Station, Ont. To obtain brochure or to register, please call: Fred & Doreen Breukelman at (905) 957-4894</p>	<p align="center">SEEKING A PASTOR</p> <p>Hope Chr. Ref. Church in Port Perry, Ont., is now seeking a pastor. Located on the shores of Lake Scugog, Port Perry is a small town, 20 min. north of Oshawa.</p> <p>We are a caring congregation of 69 families, consisting mainly of families with school-age children and supporting local Christian elementary and secondary schools.</p> <p>We seek a pastor who can encourage spiritual growth of both young and old, sharing his love for the Lord through enthusiastic and stimulating messages that can motivate our youth and encourage our members.</p> <p>If you demonstrate strong leadership and direction-setting skills, specialize in strengthening teen-youth ministry, and can tap into unused gifts and talents for God's service, please send your inquiry or profile to John Lunshof, Hope CRC, Search Committee, P.O. Box 1169, Port Perry, ON L9L 1A9.</p>
<p>OAKVILLE, Ont.: Oakville Chr. School (JK-8), interviewing teachers with majors in English, science, primary specialist, computer skills. Resume with references to:</p> <p>B. Mitchell, Principal 112 Third Line Oakville, ON L6L 3Z6 Phone: (905) 825-1247 Fax: (905) 825-3398</p>	<p align="center">Miscellaneous</p> <p>Machine operator for large vegetable farm. Enthusiastic person with farm-related experience, to do general farm work and operate spraying and harvesting equipment. Pay commensurate with experience. Phone (905) 775-0718; Fax (905) 778-1040.</p>	<p align="center">Houston Christian Reformed Church is seeking a Youth Leader</p> <p>This would be a part-time position with a family-oriented church community in the beautiful Bulkley Valley. For more information and job description contact:</p> <p align="center">Houston Christian Reformed Church Box 6, Houston, BC V0J 1Z0 or phone (250) 845-7790 or (250) 845-2838</p>
<p>WALLACEBURG, Ont.: Wallaceburg Chr. School. Applications are solicited for a half-time Kindergarten teacher and a full-time teacher for a Grade 1-2 class. Applications including a complete resume, perspective of Christian education and recommendations will be accepted by fax or mail.</p> <p>Peter Van Manen, Principal Wallaceburg Chr. School 693 Albert Street Wallaceburg, ON N8A 1Y8 Phone: (519) 627-6013 Fax: (519) 627-5051</p>	<p align="center">ST. CATHARINES, ONT.</p> <p>Martindale Place, a Christian Retirement Community. Life-lease residences. Construction of 21 patio homes with full basements and garages to begin June 1997. Prices start at \$129,900. Call regarding apartment vacancies. Ask for Carol Lotz, salesperson for I. Bell Real Estate Broker Inc., (905) 688-3537, 24 hr. pager.</p>	

Classifieds

PRINCIPAL/TEACHER OPENING

Principal/teacher position is available with **Glad Tidings Academy**, which is a new department of Glad Tidings Tabernacle (PAOC), Sudbury, Ontario. The applicant must be a committed Christian with a teacher's certificate and a minimum of three years teaching experience.

He or she must possess skills in leadership, supervision, planning, communication and public relations. The applicant should be prepared to promote the development and growth of this new Christian Elementary School.

Send application to:
Glad Tidings Tabernacle
1101 Regent St.
Sudbury, ON P3E 5P8

For further information call:
Pastor Michael Versluis
(705) 522-4523.
TEACHER POSITION ALSO AVAILABLE.

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SOUTHERN CARIBBEAN DREAM CRUISE

Visit: Aruba, Curacao, Margarita, Grenada, St. Lucia and Barbados.

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from \$1,299.00 Cdn. p/p, taxes not incl.
Optional 1 week extra stay in Aruba.
Feb. 7, 1998, departure.

MEDITERRANEAN DREAM CRUISE

Visit: Barcelona, Spain, Palma, Spain, Civitavecchia, Italy, Livorno, Italy, Portofino, Italy, and Villefranche, France.

AIR, CRUISE AND GRATUITIES
from \$1,899.00 Cdn. p/p, taxes not incl.
Optional 1 week extra stay in Barcelona, Spain.
from \$550.00 Cdn., breakfast incl.
Sept. 26, 1997, departure.

SOUTHERN CARIBBEAN CRUISE

Visit: Aruba, Curacao, San Juan, Tortola and St. Thomas

AIR AND CRUISE
from \$1,740.00 Cdn. p/p, taxes, gratuities not incl.
Oct. 4, 1997, departure.
Must be booked by May 14, 1997.

Call: GRACE for more information.
VISSCHER'S TRAVEL & CRUISE Ltd.
Tel.: (604) 530-6771/Toll Free: 1-800-811-2388

SPACE AND TIME IS LIMITED.

Job Opportunities

Job Opportunities

Lambton Christian High School

The school is soliciting applications to fill a vacancy on our staff in September of this year. The successful applicant will be responsible for administering our "state of the art" computer facility, as well as heading up the mathematics department. Please direct all inquiries, letters of application, resumes, statement of faith and philosophy of education to:

Wayne Drost, Principal
295 Essex St., Sarnia, ON N7T 4S3
(519) 337-9122; fax: (519) 337-2541

Social Service Work — Become part of our team of committed professionals providing loving care for needy children.

Mutual Support Systems, a parent model network of rural group homes in the Niagara peninsula for children experiencing emotional and behavioural difficulties, invites applications for the position of **live-in Child Care Worker(s)**.

Single males and females are invited to apply. A married couple team approach may also be considered. Position available as early as **April 30th**.

For more information about our program, including salary and benefits, please call or write to:

Randy Klassen, Personnel Manager, Mutual Support Systems, P.O.Box 397, Fenwick, ON L0S 1C0 (905) 892-4332.

See page 3 for our Calendar of Events

GIVE SOMEONE A SECOND CHANCE.

Discuss organ donation with your family and sign a donor card today.



THE KIDNEY FOUNDATION OF CANADA

Teachers

ST. CATHARINES, Ont.: Beacon Chr. High School invites applications for a possible opening in the area of English for the 1997-98 school year. The successful applicant will have some drama background. Send resume and statement of educational philosophy to:

Ted Harris, Principal
Beacon Chr. High School
2 O'Malley Drive
St. Catharines, ON L2N 6N7
Fax: (905) 937-1130

TORONTO, Ont.: Timothy Chr. School in Rexdale, Ont., invites applications from qualified teachers for the following positions:

a definite 90% Grade 7 position (computer and sports skills essential) a possible 40% Grade 2 and a possible Grade 4 position. TCS is a growing, multi-denominational school, with a caring, encouraging community. Please send resumes to:

Coby Jonker, Principal
Timothy Chr. School
28 Elmhurst Drive
Rexdale, ON M9W 2J5
Phone: (416) 741-5770
Fax: (416) 741-5770

Church News

Christian Reformed Church

Call extended:
— First, Guelph, Ont., Rev. Gerrit Bomhof of Winnipeg, Man.

Classis meeting:
— Classis Toronto will meet, D.V., May 29, 1997, at the Community CRC in Richmond Hill, Ont.
John Tenyenhuus, Stated Clerk.

Christian Stewardship Services, a national charitable organization headquartered in Toronto, has an immediate opening for an

Executive Director

Accountable to the Board of Directors, you will provide leadership in carrying out the CSS mission to promote, encourage and educate in the Christian principles of financial giving and stewardship. You are a hands-on, service- and results-oriented consultant/manager with considerable knowledge of and enthusiasm for planned giving, financial counselling and stewardship education. You will manage a small, competent staff and have overall responsibility for and participate in office administration and personal financial counselling/constituency field work.

Qualifications:

- * Assent to CSS Statement of Principles and Faith.
- * High level of familiarity with planned giving instruments and opportunities.
- * Undergraduate degree in finance, administration or related field, preferably with a financial planning designation. Experience equivalency will be considered.
- * Effective interpersonal skills for constituency and sponsor relations and public presentations.
- * Effective managerial and policy making skills.

A detailed position description and a CSS profile are available upon request. The vacancy will remain open only until a qualified candidate is selected. Please apply in confidence to:

CSS Search Committee, c/o Keith Oosthoek, Secretary, 38 Hillcrest Lane, Kitchener, ON N2K 1S8; Fax: (519) 743-4081; e-mail: coosthoek@golden.net



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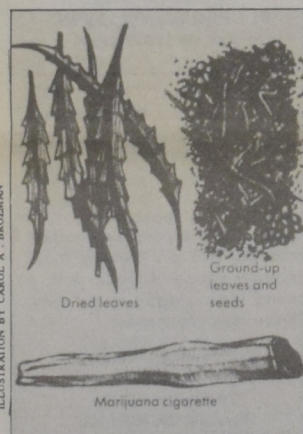
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News

Alberta government to market illegal drugs?

Cindy Bruin

The town of Rocky Mountain House, Alberta, recently completed a plebiscite in favor of banning video lottery terminals (VLTs) from the community. The successful campaign was initiated by the Rocky Mountain House Ministerial Association, chaired by Christian Reformed pastor Philip Stel. Other Alberta communities are pursuing similar campaigns. Opponents to these initiatives have reacted by criticizing churches for supposedly "legislating morality" and making everyone pay for the addictions of a few. The logic of some of those arguments led to this anticipated news story from the future.



Ontario parents organize for equal treatment of students

ANNAN, Ont. (PEC) — A new grassroots parent network is committed to expanding educational choice in Ontario, with the motto: "Opening doors for children."

"There are over 50,000 parents sending children to independent schools, thousands are homeschooling, and thousands more would like to see Charter Schools," says Phil Bye, an Owen Sound area parent and spokesperson for the province-wide Parents for Educational Choice. "It is time for government to treat all students equally."

Bye noted that Parents for Educational Choice is working to achieve official recognition

CALGARY — The Alberta government has just announced a brand new initiative that it says will "reduce crime, create jobs and tourism, and generate a minimum of \$800 million dollars of revenue per year."

Provincial spokesperson Harry McSlime says the program involves the government taking over the sales of all recreational drugs in Alberta, including marijuana, cocaine, heroin and any new drug markets. McSlime says "It's a brilliant plan. By becoming the sole legal marketers of illegal drugs in Alberta, the government can realize a high profit margin for the people of Alberta, push the legal drug dealers out of the province (thereby reducing crime), and ultimately reduce taxes for every Albertan."

The new program, called Government Politicians United to Sell Heroin and Ecstasy for the Rehabilitation of Society (Gov't PUSHERS), is scheduled to begin with the tendering of government contracts next week, April 15, 1998. Public hearings about the new program are scheduled to begin sometime in 1999.

Albertans elated

McSlime says public support of the new program has been overwhelming. "We randomly surveyed every person on the 8th Avenue mall in downtown Calgary last night at midnight, and received a very positive response, especially when we

noted that drugs would now be available legally for the first time in Canada. And when we asked Albertans if they would approve of measures that would reduce the deficit without touching their pocketbook, they were elated!"

McSlime dismisses the concerns of those who say selling drugs is illegal. "Gambling used to be illegal too, but now that the government has taken it over, we legalized and regulated gambling so that it's become a lucrative investment for Albertans."

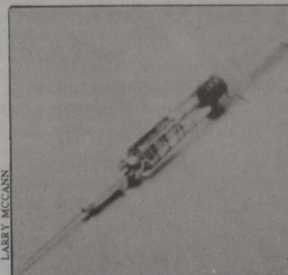
Church leaders have reacted to the Gov't PUSHERS program with dismay. "Drug use is morally and socially wrong," says Rev. B. Pure of the Evangelical Ministerial Association. "For the government to be involved in the distribution of drugs is a distortion of its task."

Morality pushers

Private operators who have an opportunity to contract the sales of the drugs for the government scorned the church response. "There go the moralists in society again," says Frank Lee Astray, owner of Drugs 4 You, "trying to legislate morality. Just because some religious people think something is wrong, they think they can tell everyone not to enjoy it. Besides, without this new opportunity, my business will go into bankruptcy and 40 potential jobs will be lost. These puritanical moralists are ruining free society opportunity for

capitalistic profit."

Rev. Pure points out that drug use is potentially dangerous to users, can lead to addiction, and has disastrous social consequences. But McSlime says that's not a problem. "By regulating this industry, government can make sure drugs are uncontaminated. And with the huge income we



receive from the Gov't PUSHERS program, we can set aside over \$210,000 per year to address the problems of addicts."

Win-win or sin-sin?

Astray thinks that arguments about social problems are just a distraction from the real intent. "Don't those guys realize that the purpose of the Alberta economy is to make money? It's not the government's job to legislate morality or worry about those poor suckers who can't handle a few drugs. That's the individual's problem, not society's problem. And the churches can just keep their mouths shut and keep up their job of saving souls."

McSlime says there is no room for opposition to Gov't PUSHERS. "Some time ago churches tried to say the government shouldn't be in the gambling and lotteries business, either. But Albertans were ready to accept that program because it was fun for the people who could handle it, they couldn't care less about the people who are so weak they get addicted and lose their homes and livelihood, and because the government makes a ton of money off lotteries and VLTs without raising taxes. It's a win-win all the way, and consistency in principles means there's no problem with our selling drugs either. It's a done deal."

The next step, says McSlime, are government advertisements featuring drug users, employing the same ad agency that creates the glamorous advertisements to encourage lottery ticket purchases.

News Digest

Shroud of Turin rescued

TURIN, Italy — Firefighters rescued the Shroud of Turin from a burning cathedral on April 12, salvaging the linen revered by some Christians as the burial cloth of Jesus Christ.

Dozens of people applauded firefighters as they took the silver and glass box holding the linen cloth out of the Duomo Cathedral, the Italian news agency ANSA reported. To reach the cloth, firefighters had to break bullet-proof glass protecting it.

The fire began the night before, and its cause was unknown. There were no reports of injuries.

Florida boycott ignored

TORONTO — Canadians seem to be ignoring a boycott by unions and the mainline churches urging them to travel to Cuba instead of Florida, reports the *Anglican Journal*. Florida tourism was actually up: more than one million Canadians visited south Florida last year, a 15 per cent increase from 1995. The boycott was launched last August by groups including the Anglican and United churches in response to the renewed U.S. embargo of Cuba.

DNA bank coming

OTTAWA — The federal government is making plans to create a national DNA data bank. The DNA Identification Act, which still needs to be approved by Parliament, would require people convicted of certain offenses to provide samples of blood, hair or saliva. These would be analyzed, and the resulting DNA profiles would be stored in a computerized data bank by the RCMP, reports the *Globe and Mail*.

The intent is to help police solve serial killings and sex crimes by looking for the offender's "genetic footprints."

"Canada will be one of only a handful of countries in the world to have a national DNA data bank," said Solicitor-General Herb Gray. The estimated \$3 million setup costs would come from the RCMP's budget.